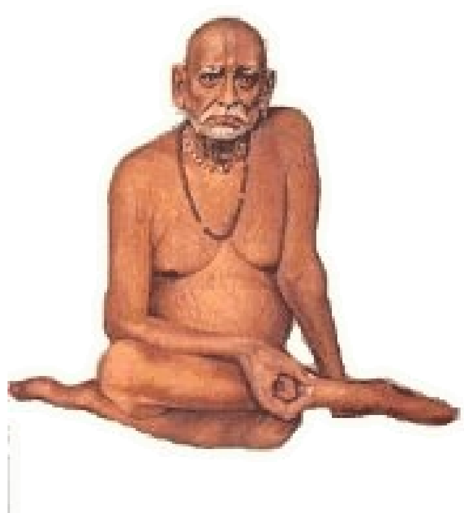
# A short biography of

## Akkalkot Niwasi
## Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj



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Shree Vitthalrao Joshi Charities Trust,
C-28, 'Suyash'/ 'Parijat',
2nd Floor, Near Amar Hind Mandal,
Gokhale Road (North), Dadar (West),
Mumbai, Pin Code: 400 028,
Maharashtra State,
INDIA.

*Anantakoti*
*Brahmanda Nayaka*
*Rajadhiraj*
*Yogiraj*
*Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj*
*Ki Jai*

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## Lord Dattatrey – An Introduction

'Aryavarta', the holy land of the Hindus, is called Bharat[1]! This Land has witnessed a number of Divine miracles and God's creations. This is a land of the sages and saints! A sacred home for penance of the accomplished ascetics!

The Hindu ethical philosophy believes the Brahma-tatva[2] that is free from all worldly desires lies at the origin of this Universe. According to the basic principle of Brahma-tatva, the attribute-less Supreme Spirit desired to be many. It created *Maya*[3], with three qualities i.e.

"Satva[4]".

"Rajas[5]"

"Tamas[6]"

And the Supreme Spirit also created this Universe.

Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh[7] are the presiding deities representing goodness, passion and ignorance. The true knowledge of Supreme spirit at the source is formless. This Supreme Spirit always remains formless and views the Maya3 with the sentiments of an eyewitness. Even though originally the deities, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Mahesh are *Nirgun-Nirakar*[8], for the sake of their devotees they manifest themselves as Sagun-Sakar[9]. Whenever there is 'Dharmaglani[10]' in this Universe, the form-less Supreme Spirit descends on this earth in the form of a Saguna-Sakar Supreme Being manifested with all the three qualities. The Supreme Being then establishes religion by protecting righteousness and annihilating the evil; eradicates the sufferings of their devotees and restores their happiness. He shows his devotees the path to their welfare as well as liberation from this worldly existence.

[1] Bharat: India
[2] Brahma-tatva: The true knowledge of Supreme Spirit
[3] Maya: Illusion.
[4] Satva: Mode of Goodness
[5] Rajas: The mode of passion
[6] Tamas: The mode of ignorance
[7] Lord Mahesh: Another name of Lord Shiva
[8] Nirgun-Nirakar: Attributeless – Formless. Virtueless and formless God
[9] Sagun-Sakar: With attributes and form. All-virtuous personified form of God
[10] Dharmaglani: Decline in religious practice

Of the several incarnations of the Supreme Spirit, the incarnation of 'Lord Dattatrey' is considered as the most eminent. It is the combination of three deities, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh. The triad represents the combination of three qualities: Goodness, Passion and Ignorance. A cow behind Lord Dattarey represents the Mother Earth and the four Dogs at his feet represent the four *Vedas*[11]. Lord Dattatrey is the presiding Deity of this holy Earth and the holy Vedas.

Since Lord Dattatrey is the manifestation of the triad, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh, he typically appears in the form of an ascetic with three heads and six arms. He has an aura of a rising sun around him and has lustrous *Jatta*[12] tied in a knot over his head. He is dressed in a deerskin and is a radiant assuring figure for the devotees. His arms are seen to be holding various objects such as *Mala*[13], *Kamandalu*[14], *Damaru*[15], *Trishul* (Trident), *Shankh* (Conch), and *Chakra* (Holy Weapon), each of them with a peculiar spiritual connotation.

*Mala* and *Kamandalu* symbolize the mode of goodness (Sattva Guna); *Shankh* and *Chakra* symbolize the mode of passion (Rajas Guna); *Trishul* and *Damaru* symbolize the mode of ignorance (Tamas Guna). Sometimes he wears a tiger skin. His whole body is covered with '*Vibhuti*'[16](Holy ash). Lord Dattatrey is also known as an *Avadhoot*[17], a *Digamber*[18], an ascetic of highest order, beyond praise, selfless, free from the consciousness of the ego, roaming free like a child over the face of the earth. He is also known to manifest in any form at his own free will. He is known to be pure consciousness in human form enjoying emancipation during his lifetime. He also asks for alms and is easily satisfied with any little devotional service of his devotees. He always protects his devotees and easily comes to their rescue, whenever they need him.

[11] Vedas: The Vedas are the most ancient books in the World, and they are the Foundation of Hinduism. Veda means knowledge. Vedas have no beginning or end. While it might surprise people how a book can have no beginning or end, the ancient Rishis who wrote these accepted that the complete knowledge of the Universe could never fit in any book, so there would always be new things to discover. This philosophy makes Hinduism a very tolerant religon, always ready to accept new ideas from other cultures.
[12] JattaA: Long Matted Hair
[13] Mala: Rossary
[14] Kamandalu: Holy Pot
[15] Damaru: A damaru is a small two-headed drum used by Lord Shiva
[16] Vibhuti: Vibhuti, a word of Sanskrit and several other languages of India. Literally, it has several meaning including all pervading; superhuman power; and wealth. Vibhuti is also the name for sacred ash used in religious worship in Hinduism, especially connected with Lord Shiva. The ash has several symbolic meanings. Placed on the forehead of devotees, it covers the mark of the spiritual third eye of Hindu belief that sees development of mystic insight as the primary path to Self-realization. It is a reminder of one's mortality since bodies are cremated being only temporary vessels of the soul. It calls to the good of ridding oneself of selfish and base worldly desires that wrap the self in Maya (illusion) just as Shiva burned the god of desire, Kama, to ashes when he attempted to break Shiva's focus on the Divine Truth.
[17] Avadhoot: An avadhoot (also spelled Avadhut**)** is a mystic who has risen above body-consciousness, duality, and worldly concerns. The term is described in one text as one who is free from the consciousness of the ego, roaming free like a child over the face of the earth. An avadhut does not identify with the body, mind or emotions. Such a person is said to be pure consciousness in human form. The nature of the avadhut is the subject of the Avadhut Gita, the authorship of which is traditionally ascribed to Dattatreya.
[18] Digambar: A naked ascetic

The *Srimad Bhagavatam*[19], mentions twenty-four incarnations of the Supreme Being, out of which the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey is the sixteenth. The *Bhagwat*[20] mentions sixteen incarnations of Lord Dattatreya himself. They are:

"Yogiraj, Atrivarad, Dattreya, Kalagnishaman. Yogijanvallabh, Leela Vishwambhar, Siddharaj, Dnyanasagar, Vishwambhar, Mayamukta, Mayayukta, Adiguru, Shivaroop, Devadev, Digambar, Krishnashyamkamalnayan".

These incarnations have been described in the Hindu Mythology. The only one, who has fully dedicated Himself to the devotees is Lord Dattatrey.

## The Guru (preceptor) of Lord Dattatrey

Lord Dattatrey is honoured as a *Jagadguru*[21]. He himself had twenty-four preceptors. He closely observed different qualities in this world and accepted only those qualities favourable for one's accomplishment. He rejected unfavourable qualities.

1) From Earth, Lord Dattatrey accepted the qualities of forgiveness and calmness.
2) From Air, He accepted the qualities of non-attachment and purity.
3) From Sky, He accepted the qualities of equality, aloofness, oneness, and cleanliness.
4) From water, He accepted cleanliness and uniformity.
5) From Fire, He accepted aloofness, lustre and brilliance.
6) From Moon, He learned that this soul remains unaffected in spite of the existence of emotions in human body.
7) From the Sun, He realized about aloofness and benevolence
8) From the Pigeon, He learned that excess love and attachment could lead to damage.
9) From the Python, He learned to lie down quietly without any physical action, since whatever is meant to happen, will happen in any case.
10) From the Sea, He accepted the qualities of earnestness and modesty.
11) He learned from a Moth that if one gets enamoured and clings, their Self would be destroyed.

[19] Srimad Bhagavatam: One of the most important classics of India describing the life and times of Lord Krishna. It is verily the Hindu Bible. Also called Bhagvat Purana. The writer of this book is named Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasadeva, also called Badarayana. He is the Lord, the bhagavan, amongst the philosophers, who in India assembled all the holy texts. He arranged the Vedas, the basic books (s'ruti) with the mantras for the rituals, the wisdom and the hymns and wrote the Mahabharata, the greatest epic poem in the world describing the history (itihâsa) of the great fall that the Vedic culture once made. The Bhagavad Gita is a part of it. Vyâsa also wrote the rest of the eighteen great Bibles (the puranas) of India as well as the Brahma-sutra, his masterpiece on the Absolute Truth.
[20] Bhagwat: A Purana depicting the glory of Lord Vishnu
[21] Jagadguru: The preceptor of the world.

12) He learned from the Bee that the tendency towards excessive collection brings destruction.

13) He learned from the Elephant that because of its carelessness, it gets entangled in difficulties and has to become a slave of his partner. Hence one should avoid the company of a woman.

14) He learned from the Black bee that one should try to gain without inflicting pain on anybody else.

15) He learned from the Deer that it is dangerous to become engrossed in music and loose focus. One should always remain alert.

16) He learned from Fish that envy or jealousy could lead to death.

17) He learned from the Courtesan that one couldn't be completely happy and get good sleep if they have many expectations. For one's rescue, one should be self-supporting.

18) He learned from a Bird-lapwing (Titavi) that unwanted savings bring destruction in the end.

19) He learned from a Young Boy that one should forsake respect, disrespect, and anxiety.

20) He learned from a Maiden and her bracelets that solitude is always excellent

21) He learned from a Snake that one should live alone and without any contacts.

22) He learned the importance of concentration in one's work from the Blacksmith.

23) A Black Bee is an enemy of a worm and out of fear, the worm contemplates on the black bee to such an extent that the worm itself becomes a black bee. Hence Lord Dattatrey realized the importance of concentration and contemplation from the worm.

24) He learned from a Female Spider that in the expansion, creation and destruction, there is 'Advait' (The doctrine that identifies universe with God).

In this manner, by accepting favourable qualities and rejecting unfavourable qualities, Lord Dattatrey became a 'Jagadguru'.

## The disciples of Lord Dattatrey

Lord Dattatrey had several disciples. He was very pleased with Krutaveerya's son, Arjun (Kartaveerya, Sahasrarjun), so he made him king of planet earth. He also blessed King Arjun with thousand hands and self-knowledge.

Pralhad, the devotee of Lord Narsinha[22] had the divine vision of the Supreme Spirit when he received initiation from Lord Dattatrey. King Alarka, the son of the chaste woman Madalasa, was very materialistic and addicted to pleasures. However, when Lord Dattatrey initiated him, a miracle occurred and he renounced all worldly pleasures as well as his kingdom. He then became a great ascetic. Lord Dattatrey

[22] Lord Narsinha: Lion-Headed Man - The Fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu

passed on his knowledge gained from the twenty-four preceptors to King Yadu and helped him give up his evil qualities to accept only good qualities. Lord Dattatrey blessed King Aayu with a son and in the end emancipated him with divine knowledge. Lord Dattatrey blessed a devotee named Vishnudatta with 'Mantrashastra[23]' for the purpose of benevolence. Lord Dattatrey is therefore, respected as a generously magnanimous incarnation.

## Birth of Lord Dattatrey

Anusuya, the wife of the sage Atri rishi[24], was very chaste and virtuous. The fame and lustre of Anusuya's chastity and virtue had already spread far and wide in the three worlds (heaven, earth and nether world). Goddess Savitri, Goddess Lakshmi and Goddess Parvati, wives of the three Gods Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh became jealous due to the splendour of the religious merit of Anusuya. The great sage Narada[25] instigated the three divine goddesses who then convinced their husbands to test Anusuya for her chastity and virtue. With this intent, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh approached the hermitage of sage Atri as guests in the form of Brahmins.

Sage Atri was away from the hermitage at that time. Anusuya prepared food for the three guests. But then the three guests made a strange request, "we will accept your food only if you feed us without wearing any garment". Embarrassed with this strange request of the guests, Anusuya was highly confused. Her virtue and chastity were at stake on one side and her hospitality was at stake on the other hand. Then Anusuya took some water from the *Kamandalu14* of sage Atri and sprinkled it on the guests. Miraculously, the guests turned into babies and started crying. Due to their crying, the motherly affection in Anusuya was stimulated and she breast-fed all the three babies.

When the three Gods did not return as expected, their wives Savitri, Lakshmi and Parvati became very anxious and worried. They approached Anusuya's hermitage, claiming their husbands. Anusuya informed them "Your husbands did not come here. The three guests that did come here are in the cradle at present". The three Goddesses found it impossible to identify their husbands in the form of babies. The Goddesses then surrendered themselves to Anusuya and requested for her help. Anusuya then once

[23] Mantrashastra: A sacred science which teaches the prayers and hymns to be addressed to particular deities

[24] Atri Rishi: Atri maharishi is one of the ten sons of Creator Brahma, created by just the will of the Almighty and therefore designated as a Maanasa-putras (mentally generated issues). There were ten of these. Atri's wife is Anasuyaa, a daughter of Kardama Prajapati. They had three sons: Datta, Durvasa and Soma. Rama, the son of Dasaratha, visited Atri Maharishi's Ashram during his fourteen years of stay in the forest. It was Atri who showed the way to Dandakaranya forest to Rama, after showering his hospitality on him. Atri Maharishi is considered to be one of the great discoverers of sacred Mantras of Hinduism. In his family line there were a few other seers of mantras namely: Shaavaashva, Avishtir, and Purvaatithi. There were also other great Rishis in that line: Mudgala, Uddaalaki, Shaakalaayani, Chaandogya, etc. Atri-samhita and Atri-smriti are two works attributed to Atri.

[25] Sage Narada: A divine sage, who is an enduring chanter of the names Hari and Narayana which are other names for Vishnu, considered to be the supreme God by Hindus. He is regarded the Manasputra (son born of one's mind) of Brahma as he was born of his thoughts. He is regarded as the Triloka sanchaari, the ultimate nomad who roams the three lokas of Swargaloka (heaven), Mrityuloka (earth) and Patalloka (nether-world). He does this to find out about the life and welfare of people. He was the first to practise Natya Yoga. He is also known as Kalahapriya as he playfully causes quarrels amongst Gods (devas), Goddesses and people.

again sprinkled the water from sage Atri's *kamandalu* on the babies and the babies assumed their original forms of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh.

Due to the splendour and glory of the religious merit of Anusuya, the three Gods individually left a portion of their Divine essence with Anusuya before returning back. The Divine essence of the three Gods integrated in one form and Lord Dattatrey was born at Sunset time on *Margasheersh Poornima*[26] Day.

In the Hindu mythology, there is a second narration of this event where the three Gods, Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Mahesh blessed Anusuya and sage Atri with three sons. Each son was blessed with the Divinity of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh respectively. Moon, their first son was the form of passion, represented Lord Brahma; Datta, the second son with the form of goodness, represented Lord Vishnu; and Durvasa was the third son with the form of ignorance, represented Lord Mahesh. After a few days, the two sons Moon and Durvasa merged their divinity into Datta and went away. Moon took his place in the sky and Durvasa opted for penance. Thus all the three Divine forms, merged into Datta, who then became known as Dattatrey with three faces and six hands.

## The Superior-most Incarnation

Amongst all the incarnations of the Supreme Being, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey is considered to be the most Superior. Shree Vasudevanand Saraswati alias Shree Tembe swami, who is considered as the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey in modern age said "The incarnation of Lord Dattatrey is considered as the first and foremost of all incarnations of the Supreme-Being. The incarnation of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna acted according to the duties with respect to the four castes and four stages of life. Lord Dattatrey also had oneness with Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, but was superior most in class."

He was an *Avadhoot17,* but he was also a *Panchashramee*[27]. Hence the religious institutes have considered Lord Dattatrey superior to even the religious people of a hermitage. For people in hermitage, Lord Dattatrey is adorable and for Gods, demons and mankind, he is considered very respectable. Nobody had enmity towards him out of hatred since he always loved everyone unbiased. Why would anyone hate him, when his incarnation is not meant to slay anybody?

Lord Dattatrey was an incarnation as a saviour of devotees. Hence the compassionate Lord Dattatrey took birth in the hermitage of the chaste and virtuous Anasuya to uplift the lives of those enduring in the threefold misery in this ocean of worldly affairs, as well as to give them happiness and to fulfil their desires. Without

[26] Margasheersh Poornima: Full moon day of the ninth Hindu month and the month of December as per English Calendar.
[27] Panchashramee: One who observes the five stages of life of a Brahman

giving up the mission of his incarnation he remained immortal, until the end of *Kalpa*[28].

Lord Dattatrey is considered as the most dignified incarnation since he is the manifestation of the three Divine powers of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Mahesh. These three divine powers represent the creation, continuance and destruction of this Universe respectively. Sage Vasishtha, the Guru of Lord Rama and Krishna considers Lord Dattatrey as his Guru and honours him greatly by offering a standing obeisance. If a great soul like that of Sage Vasishtha, who is ever free from corporeal existence, is always absorbed in the contemplation of Brahma having detached himself of this worldly existence through worship, adoring and chanting the name of Lord Dattatrey, then ordinary souls like us that are dependent of others for welfare should definitely carry out similar worship and chanting without fail for our own upliftment.

In *Satya Yuga*[29]*,* Lord Dattatrey took the first incarnation as the son of sage Atri and his virtuous wife Anasuya. He is three headed with six hands and is a constant wanderer. He lives on alms, always recollects and is very kind to his devotees. This is the original incarnation of Lord Dattatrey as described in Mythology.

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[28] Kalpa: A kalpa is a length of time in Hindu cosmology. It is equal to 4,320 million years, a "day of Brahma" or one thousand Yugas, measuring the duration of the world; a "month of Brahma" is supposed to contain thirty such Kalpas, or 129.6 billion years. According to the Mahabharata, 12 months of Brahma constitute his year, and 100 such years. Fifty years of Brahma's are supposed to have elapsed, and we are now in the shvetavaraha-kalpa of the fifty-first; at the end of a Kalpa the world is annihilated.

[29] Satya yuga: The first Yuga or age, the golden age, comprising of one million seven hundred twentyeight thousand years.
In Hindu tradition, the world goes through a continuous cycle of these epochs. Each ascending phase of the cycle from Kali Yuga to Satya Yuga is followed by a descending phase back to Kali Yuga, then another ascending phase and so on. Alternatively, it is sometimes supposed that at the end of the descending Kali Yuga, the world will return to the Satya Yuga, and begin a new decline.
The descent from Satya to Kali is associated with progressively deterioration of Dharma (righteousness) manifested as decrease in length of human life and quality of human moral standards.
The traditional virtues accorded highest value in the four epochs are: Satya Yuga or Krita Yuga - dhyana (meditation), Treta Yuga - yajna (sacrifice), Dvapara Yuga - archana (worship), Kali Yuga - daana (gifts)
In the highest yuga, the great majority of the people can experience spirituality by direct intuitive realization of truth. The veil between the material and the transcendent realms becomes almost transparent. According to Natya Shastra, there is no Natya performances in the Krita Yuga because it is a period free from any kind of unhappiness or misery. Satya Yuga is also called the Golden Age.
Treta Yuga is the mental age, mental power is harnessed, men are in power, and inventions dissolve the illusion of time. (Inventions are characteristic of both Dvapara and Treta yugas.)
In Dwapara Yuga, science flourishes, people experience the spiritual in terms of subtle energies and rational choices, inventions are abundant, particularly those that dissolve the illusion of distance (between people and between things), and power is mostly in the hands of women. The end of this age is associated with the death of Krishna, and the events described in the Mahabharata.
In the lowest phase, Kali Yuga, most people are aware only of the physical aspect of existence, the predominant emphasis of living is material survival, and power is mostly in the hands of men. People's relationship with the spiritual is governed predominantly by superstition and by authority.
Temples, wars, and writing are hallmarks of Dvapara and Kali yugas. In the higher ages (Treta and Satya), writing is unnecessary because people communicate directly by thought; temples are unnecessary because people feel the omnipresence of God; wars are rare but they do occur; one such war is described in the Ramayana.
The traditional timescale of the yugas is as follows:

Satya Yuga or Krita Yuga - 1,728,000 years
Treta Yuga - 1,296,000 years
Dvapara Yuga - 864,000 years
Kali Yuga - 432,000 years
Upon conclusion of seventy-one (or sometimes seven) circuits of this cycle, there is a period equally long during which the world is inundated; then the cycle begins again.

It is said that Lord Dattatrey normally lived on Girnar Mountain in Gujarat State, but He wandered around the whole day. He would bathe in Kashi (Benaras); perform religious rituals in Panchaleshwar; collect alms in Kolhapur, in Maharashtra State, and sleep at Mahur Gad. Nevertheless, the constant wanderer Lord Dattatrey's Divine presence is all pervading.

## Sripad Sri Vallabh - A Historical Incarnation

Historically, Sripad SriVallabh has been regarded as the first incarnation of Lord Dattatrey. The *Guru Charitra*[30], written in Marathi is regarded as the first and foremost composition on the traditional doctrine of Lord Dattatrey. This book entails a number of miracles conducted by Sripad SriVallabh and Shree Narasinha Saraswati, the incarnations of Lord Dattatrey.

The miracles of Sripad SriVallabh have been described in the fifth, eighth, ninth and tenth chapters of Gurucharitra. In the Eastern Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh State, there is a town called Pithapuram near Kakinada. Pithapuram is one of the five *pitruteerth* where performance of a *Shraddha*[31] in honour of the manes is considered to be particularly beneficial.

A pious Brahmin[32] couple, Aparaj and his wife Sumati lived in this village. There was a Shraddha ceremony in their house on an *Amavasya day*[33]. Aparaj and Sumati were the devotees of Lord Dattatrey. Unfortunately, none of their offspring's other than two sons had survived after birth. Even the two sons that survived were unfortunate since one of them was blind and the other was crippled. Hence Sumati was always distressed. On the afternoon of that Shraddha day, Lord Dattatrey came to her house disguised as a mendicant. The food was yet to be served to the Brahmins present in the Shraddha ceremony. However, out of hospitality Sumati fed the guest, Lord Dattatrey to his fullest satisfaction. Lord Dattatrey was highly pleased with her devotion and manifested before her in the form of Trinity[34].

Lord Dattatrey said, "Mother, I am pleased with your devotion. Tell me your wish and I shall fulfil your wish". Sumati laid herself on the lotus feet of Lord Dattatrey and washed them with her tears of affection. Then Sumati prayed to Lord Dattatrey "Oh Lord! You have addressed me as a mother and this itself has made me content. My offspring's do not survive. Only two sons survived, out of which one is blind and the other is crippled. Hence with your Divine grace, please bless me a son endowed with knowledge like you!"

[30] Guru Charitra: The biography of the spiritual preceptor
[31] Shraddha: Offerings in the memory of the manes of the deceased ancestors - death anniversary of one of the family members
[32] Brahmin: The traditional higher caste wherein the person is an expert in the knowledge of Vedas and other Vedic texts in the Hindu sacred Scriptures
[33] Amavasya day: New moon day
[34] Trinity: A union of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva

Lord Dattatrey replied, "Your wish shall be fulfilled. A son will be born to you as per your wish; he will uplift your entire family. He will be gifted with the knowledge, but he would not stay with you for too long. Do not stop him from leaving your home". Granting such a blessing to Sumati, Lord Dattatrey disappeared. The virtuous Sumati told about this entire incident in detail to her husband Aparaj when he arrived at home and asked him "Have I accrued any sin by feeding the guest before feeding the Brahmins? ". Aparaj was a wise Brahmin. He said, "Sumati, you have done a virtuous action. For the satisfaction of the manes of the deceased ancestors, the ceremony is performed and the offerings are dedicated to Lord Vishnu. Today due to our good fortune, Lord Dattatrey himself came and blessed us by accepting our offerings. Certainly the manes of our deceased ancestors will be very pleased with this".

In due time, Sumati gave birth to a baby boy on *Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi*[35] day. His feet carried the holy signs of *Vajra* (thunderbolt of God Indra), *Ankush* (an elephant goad), *Dhwaj* (an ensign) and a *Kamal* (Lotus). Hence they named him as Sripad. The astrologer, after due calculations predicted that their son Sripad is an incarnation of God who would become a great ascetic and a Jagadguru21. With his childish plays and miracles, Sripad pleased his parents. When he was seven, his parents performed his thread ceremony. After staying in the *Ashram* of a Guru and following the *Brahmacharya-ashram*[36] . Sripad very soon read the four *Vedas* and six *Shastras*. Then he started speaking to people about the real meaning of the established rule of conduct, behaviour, usage, and atonement for sin and Holy Scriptures. When Sripad became sixteen year old, his parents started thinking about his marriage. That's when Sripad reminded them, "I am born to be an ascetic, not for marriage. I want to be free from worldly attachments or to enjoy worldly pleasures. I am married to all the *27 yoga's*[37] in this universe. For the accomplishment of the yoga's, I would like to travel to the north. ".

Sumati spoke to Sripad, "My son, you are Datta, the Divine Trinity incarnate and you are born as my son according to your own promise to me. We shall not go against your wish. However, in this old age who will look after us? Who will look after your blind and crippled brothers? ". Sripad wiped his mother's tears and then called his brothers near him. He blessed them both with his Divine grace and miraculously they both became perfectly normal. Then Sripad told his mother "Mother, both of these brothers would live for one hundred years and serve both of you throughout your life. Also, Goddess Laxmi will live in this house forever. There would be no place for worries. Please bless me now and give your kind permission to leave this house and go from here". Sripad Srivallabh fell at the feet of his parents and took their blessings to leave the house. Then Sripad Srivallabh, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey disappeared from that house and manifested himself at *Kashi-Banaras*[38]. From there, he went to Badrikedar38 and performed deep penance. While returning from Badrikedar, he went to *Gokarn Mahabaleshwer*[39]*,* stayed there and performed penance. From Gokarn, he

[35] Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi: Month of August-September as per English calendar

[36] Brahmacharya-ashram*:* The first of the four Ashrams or stages of life, through which the Brahmin passes- that from the investiture with the sacrificial thread until marriage

[37] 27 Yoga's: There are twenty-seven yoga's; they are Vishkambh, Preeti, Ayushman, Soubhagya, Shobhan, Atigand, Sukarma, Dhruti, Shoola, Gand, Vruddhi, Dhruv, Vyaghat, Harshana, Vajra, Siddhi, Vyatipat, Variyan, Parigha, Shiva, Siddhi, Sadhya, Shubha, Shukla, Brahma, Aaindra, and Vaighruti. The astrologers enumerate twenty-eight yoga's.

[38] Kashi Benaras, Badrikedar: Holy places in Uttar Pradesh State, in India.

[39] Gokarn Mahabaleshwer: A holy place in Karnatak State

arrived at a small island on Krishna river called Kuruvpur (Kuruvatti). This island was located about sixteen Kilometers away from Raichur in Karnataka State.

Sripad Srivallabh stayed in Kuravpur guised as an ascetic. He was seen with wooden sandals in his feet, wearing just a *langoti*[40]around his loins, his body covered with saffron coloured garment, *Kamandalu* in his hand, a *rudraksha*[41] *Mala* around his neck, forehead marked with holy ash, matted and braided hair on his head. After bathing he would worship Goddess Gayatri. In the afternoon, he would go out to collect alms. Observing his Divinely gracious figure, people all around started respecting him. Sripad, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey performed a number of miracles during his stay on this island.

## Ambika granted boon by Sripad Srivallabh

A Brahmin well versed in *Vedas11* and *Shastras*[42] stayed on this island. His wife Ambika had a very good character but they had no children. Hence with great devotion, they went on a pilgrimage and visited a number of places. However, none of their children survived. Eventually, one son survived but due to their misfortune he was dull and not too smart since birth. Hence the Brahmin couple was very much dejected and unhappy.

The Brahmin thought that he would improve after the *thread ceremony*[43]. Hence he performed the sacred thread ceremony of his son. He tried to teach him all the religious duties of a Brahmin, but it was all in vain. The boy never remembered anything taught by his father. Due to anger, his father beat him severely. Unable to bear the pain, the boy would scream loudly. His mother Ambika used to writhe in pain by those screams. Eventually, Ambika lost her patience and spoke to her husband, “What is the use of beating him? He is dull and helpless by birth. Probably it might be the result of his deeds committed in past life. I cannot tolerate this severe beating. I am unable to bear his loud screams. Nobody can go against one’s destiny. It is God’s wish. In case you continue this beating, then I will die”. Out of frustration, the Brahmin stopped teaching and the beating stopped as a result. After this, the Brahmin always remained depressed and after a few days he passed away.

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[40] Langoti: A strip of cloth just covering the private parts

[41] Rudraksha: Rudraksha has its etymological origin in the Sanskrit words, ‘Rudra’ and ‘Aksha’. ‘Rudra’ is another name for Lord Shiva, and ‘aksha’ means teardrop. Mythological tales have it that the Rudraksha plant was born out of Lord Shiva’s tear drops. Ancient scriptures, such as ‘Shiva Purana’, ‘Padma Purana’ and ‘Srimad Bhagavad’ mention the greatness and wonderful powers of the Rudraksha. For thousands of years, they have adorned the bodies of sages and saints leading a fearless life in far-flung frontiers seeking enlightenment and liberation.

[42] Shastras: Shastra is a Sanskrit word used to denote education/knowledge in a general sense. The word is generally used as a suffix in the context of technical or specialised knowledge in a defined area of practice. For example, Astra shastra means, knowledge about "Handling of weapons", Astra means weapons, and Shastra is their knowledge. The shastra is commonly used to mean a treatise or text written in explanation of some idea/topic. There are several types of shastras in the Hindu religion.

[43] Thread Ceremony: ‘Upanayanam’ perhaps better known outside India by the name "Sacred thread ceremony", is a Hindu rite-of-passage ritual. Traditionally, the ceremony was performed to mark the point at which male children began their formal education. The ceremony is performed to young boys of 7+ years of age (and girls in some sects) from the three varnas of brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya. The youngster is taught during the ceremony the secret of life through Brahmopadesam (revealing the nature of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality) or the Gayatri mantra. He then becomes qualified for life as a student or Brahmacharya, as prescribed in the Manusmriti. The Sanskrit word Upanayanam is believed to be derived from the word nayanam meaning "eye", prefixed with upa- ("auxiliary"), making for the interpretative meaning: bringing (the ultimate truth nearer in sight)

Ambika was struck with great calamity after the death of her husband. Now she was left without a husband and a dumb son. With great difficulty, Ambika continued her bare minimum subsistence working as a maidservant. Her son grew up, but people continued to condemn him. They would taunt him, "In the house of a learned father you are born as a dullard. Now you are troubling your mother. Either you work as a labourer somewhere or die by drowning yourself in the river. You are a stigma for the Brahmin community".

Due to this severe reprimand, the boy became very miserable. He wept throughout the night and then decided to end his life by committing suicide. He informed his mother about his decision and said "Death is better than this life". Ambika also thought that she should not live anymore. Therefore, both Ambika and her son went to the river, chanting the name of God, to commit suicide. At that very moment, Sripad Srivallabh was taking a bath in the river. Both Ambika and her son offered their obeisance to Sripad Srivallabh. Sripad Srivallabh, who possessed intuitive knowledge and compassion stopped them from committing suicide and asked them the reason for their action.

Ambika related him the long story about her life and said, "Oh! Lord! Now it has become extremely difficult for me and my son to live in this world anymore. There is no means for our continuance. Hence, we both have decided to end our lives by committing suicide. Due to our great fortune, we have been blessed with your Divine sight during the last moments of our life. At least in my next life, I should not be cheated. I may be blessed with a son like you who is worthy and well versed in Divine knowledge". By so praying Ambika prostrated on the feet of Lord Sripad Srivallabh. The compassionate, Sripad Srivallabh spoke to her "It is a great sin to commit suicide. Hence abandon that thought and as a Brahmin woman, observe the religious vow of *Pradosh*[44]. Then your hearts desire will be fulfilled".

Sripad Srivallabh, then called Ambika's son and blessed him by placing his bountiful hand on his head and ordered him to recite Vedas. The Brahmin boy, who was considered as a dullard until now, suddenly started reciting the 'Vedas'. People who witnessed this miracle glorified Lord Sripad Srivallabh. Once blessed by the Divine grace of Lord Dattatrey where would bad luck be? Ambika's bad luck disappeared altogether. Ambika's son started getting respect from the villagers. He got married and lived happily with children. Ambika continued to observe the religious vow of Pradosh with great devotion.

## The story of a Washer-man

Lord Sripad Srivallabh went to the riverbank daily for bathing. An old washer-man regularly went to the same riverbank to wash clothes. He saluted Lord Sripad Srivallabh everyday without fail as he passed him and then continued with his routine. One day, a Muslim King who ruled the other side of the riverbank came there along with his queen and entourage of elephants, horses, palanquin and soldiers for sporting in

[44] Pradosh: Shivopasana, an observance in the worship of Lord Shiva on the evening of thirteenth lunar day

water. The washerman was simply dumbfounded watching this royal retinue. He kept thinking throughout the day, 'I have to struggle hard, but how fortunate is this King to enjoy this life! Where is this type of happiness in my destiny?'

The washer-man was fully engrossed in his thoughts, when Lord Sripad Srivallabh arrived there. However, the washer-man did not notice his arrival until Lord Sripad Srivallabh asked him what he was thinking so deeply? Hearing the words of Lord Sripad, the washer-man was simply agitated and said "Oh Lord! My life is a total waste compared to that of this king. I am not sure what merits this king have accumulated to enjoy this kind of happiness.".

The compassionate Lord replied, "You have struggled for your existence through out your life. Now you are seized with the mode of passion. You cannot attain emancipation until you enjoy all the happiness. You will certainly enjoy all the royal pleasures. So tell me whether you would like to enjoy these pleasures in this life or in the next life? ".

The washer-man said "Oh Lord! How much royal pleasure can I enjoy in this old age. If I can get that royal pleasure in my next life, I would be very much pleased. But despite enjoying all royal pleasures, I would never forget you". Lord Sripad said, "As you wish. In your next life you would take birth in the house of a Muslim emperor at Vaidurya nagar (Beedar, Karnataka). There you would enjoy all sorts of royal pleasures. In that birth too you will get my divine blessings (***Darshan***[45]***).*** At that time I would be wandering in my reincarnation as an ascetic named Narasimha Saraswati". Granting the boon, Lord Sripad left. The washer-man returned home singing and praising Lord Sripad. In due time, the washer-man died and was born in the house of the Muslim Emperor at Bidar as mentioned by Lord Sripad Srivallabh.

In Kuravpur, Lord Sripad Srivallabh, had advised a Brahmin woman Ambika to observe the religious vow of Pradosh (Shivopasana) and also had granted a boon that in her next birth she would get a son worthy and well versed in divine knowledge like him.

So to fulfil both these promises, Lord Sripad decided to end this incarnation and undergo *samadhi*[46]. In Kuravpur he had a large number of devotees. He decided to lead

[45] Darshan: **Darshan** is a Sanskrit term meaning sight (in the sense of an instance of seeing something or somebody), vision, apparition, or a glimpse. It is most commonly used for visions of the divine; that is, of a god or a very holy person or artifact. We could have a "darshan" of the deity in the temple (at the gross level) or have a "darshan" in that inward eye of a light or awareness (at a subtle plane). Sudarshan means a glimpse of the "self".
In India people travel hundreds of kilometres for the **darshan**, the look, of a holy man or woman because this look is believed to confer blessings. Conversely, looks of anger or envy are widely feared.
"Darshan" means Seeing, derived from the root drsh= "to see" To see with reverence and devotion. The term is used specifically for beholding highly revered people with the intention of inwardly contacting and receiving their grace and blessings. "By doing darshan properly a devotee develops affection for God, and God develops affection for that devotee."
In Indian culture, the touching of the feet (pranām or charaṇasparsh) is a show of respect and it is often an integral part of darshan. Children do touch the feet of their family elders while people of all ages will bend to touch the feet of a great guru or a form of God (such as Ram or Krishna).

[46] Samadhi: Samadhi is a term that describes a non-dualistic state of consciousness in which the consciousness of the experiencing subject becomes one with the experienced object, and in which the mind becomes still (one-pointed or concentrated)but the person remains conscious. A tomb is normally constructed at the place where a Sadguru takes 'Samadhi'. In such cases the Tomb is referred to as 'Samadhi'.

them all on the path of true devotion and then started preparing for his departure. He selected a place for his samadhi and on *Ashwin Krishna Dwadashi*[47] day, he went into live samadhi. His disciples built a tomb in that place and installed the Padukas76 of Lord Sripad Srivallabh. **In *Datta-Samprayada*[48], this day is celebrated as Gurudwadashi with great devotion. Even today, devotees experience the Divine presence and grace of Lord Sripad Srivallabh.**

[47] Ashwin Krishna Dwadashi: The twelfth day of second fortnight of the seventh 'Ashwin' month as per Hindu Calendar and October or November month as per English calendar
[48] Datta-Sampradaya: The tradition of Lord Dattatrey and his lineage

## Eternal Incarnation of Lord Dattatrey

Lord Dattatrey incarnated in *Satya Yuga*[49] and maintained that form eternally. Similarly, Lord Sripad Srivallabh, the reincarnation of Lord Dattatrey maintained his Divine grace on earth fulfilling the wishes of his devotees even after taking samadhi. Later he reincarnated himself as Lord Narasinha Saraswati. The devotees still experience the divine manifestation of this later incarnation.

**The incarnation of Lord Dattatrey never ends. For the welfare of the devotees He manifests Himself on any occasion and in any form to shower his Divine presence and grace. Hence the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey is eternal and everlasting.**

## Vallabhesh Brahmin - His Protection.

Even after his samadhi, Lord Sripad Srivallabh has manifested himself and performed many miracles. There was a Brahmin named Vallabhesh from Karnataka State. He travelled across villages for the sake of his business. Whatever profit he made from his business, he considered it as blessings of his Guru and spend it to offer food to the Brahmins and other needy people. Once he vowed that if he gets abundant profit that year, he would celebrate a festival for three days at the samadhi place of Lord Sripad Srivallabh.

That year, Vallabhesh gained hundred times more profit in his business. He thought of going to Kuravpur for celebrating the festival and giving a feast to the mendicants. The news spread in the village of Kuravpur. There were three dacoits in that village that planned to loot Vallabhesh on his way to the village. When Vallabhesh started for Kuravpur with all the material required for the festival, the dacoits accompanied him in disguise of travellers. Vallabhesh trusted these travellers not knowing their true identity. On their long journey, when they halted at a place, the dacoits cut off Vallabhesh's head and went away with the loot. At the time of his death, Vallabhesh had mentally recited the name of Lord Sripad Srivallabh. Lord Sripad, who is worthy of remembrance, ran out to help his devotee with his *Trishul*[50] and Sword and killed two dacoits. The third dacoit was a kind person. Hence Lord Sripad puffed up some sacred ash through the third dacoit on Vallabhesh and brought him back to life before disappearing. When Vallabhesh came to life, the kind dacoit told him the real facts. Hearing the true incident Vallabhesh became very unhappy since he did not get

[49] Satya Yuga: The Satya Yuga, also called Sat Yuga, Krta Yuga and Krita Yuga is the "Yuga (Age or Era) of Truth", when humankind is governed by gods, and every manifestation or work is close to the purest ideal and mankind will allow intrinsic goodness to rule supreme. It is sometimes referred to as the "Golden Age."
The yugas are said to succeed each other almost endlessly. After the perfect Satya Yuga, a decline marks the Treta Yuga. Further decline brings about the Dwapara Yuga, and after it comes the final and dark Kali Yuga, a time of wickedness, when man kills man. At the end of the cycle a Divine Being is said to take birth and reestablish righteousness, thus beginning a new Satya Yuga. Amongst the four eras, the Satya Yuga is the first and the most significant one. This era extends up to 1,728,000 years. Knowledge, meditation, and penance hold special importance in this era. All the pillars of religion are present in totality. During Satya Yuga, all people engage only in good, sublime deeds.

[50] Trishul: Trident. This is the weapon wielded by Hindu God, Lord Shiva. The three points are said to represent Shiva's three aspects - creator, destroyer and protector.

the Divine sight of Lord Sripad. Thrilled with this experience of Divine favour, he reached Kuravpur, celebrated the festival with great pomp and gave a feast to all.

Even today, thousands of devotees experience the Divine grace of Lord Sripad Srivallabh.

## Narasinha Saraswati -The Reincarnation of Lord Dattatrey

**In Kuravpur, Lord Sripad Srivallabh had promised a Brahmin woman named Ambika that he would take birth as her son. He had also promised a washerman that he would meet him in his next life. To fulfil these promises Lord Sripad Srivallabh reincarnated as Narasinha Saraswati. This is the second reincarnation of Lord Dattatrey.**

### Narhari - Reincarnation of Lord Dattatrey

In Karanjanagar, Akola District, Maharashtra State, Ambika from Kuravpur took rebirth in a Brahmin family. She was named as Ambabhavani with great affection. 'Amba' became her nickname. Since early childhood she observed the religious vow of Pradosh44. At 13, she got married to a young man named Madhav. Madhav resided in the same town and was a learned person. He was also a devotee of *Lord Shiva*[51]. Both of them observed the religious vow of Pradosh with great devotion.

**In January, year 1378, (Pausha Shukla Dwiteeya, year 1300, Shaniwaar) Amba gave birth to a beautiful child. Lord Dattatrey himself had reincarnated again in this birth as Amba's child. The child, instead of crying uttered the Omkar[52] chant. Observing this strange phenomenon, the horoscope of the child was developed. The astrologer predicted that this child would grow up to have a special & unique identity. The child was named as Narhari with great enthusiasm.**

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[51] Lord Shiva: Shiva is a form of Ishvara or God. Shiva is the supreme God in Shaivism, one of the major branches of Hinduism.
Adi Sankara interprets the name Shiva meaning "One who purifies everyone by the utterance of His name" or the Pure One. That is, Shiva is unaffected by the three gunas (characteristics) of Prakrti (matter) namely Satva, Rajas, and Tamas.
Shiva is one of the Trimurti (i.e trinity"). In the Trimurti, Shiva is the destroyer, while Brahma is the creator and Vishnu is the preserver. Even though he represents destruction, Shiva is viewed as a positive force (The Destroyer of Evil), since creation follows destruction. However, according to Shaivism, Shiva is not merely a destroyer but performs five functions: 1. Creator, 2. Preserver, 3. Destroyer, 4. Hiding the sins, and most importantly, 5. Blessing.
Shiva also assumes many other roles, including the Lord of Ascetics (Mahadeva), the Lord of Boons (Rudra), and also the Universal Divinity (Mahesvara).Shaivaites, the worshippers of Shiva consider as the Ultimate Reality.
Shiva is usually represented by the Shiva linga (or lingam), usually depicted as a clay mound with three horizontal stripes on it. In anthropomorphised images, he is generally represented as immersed in deep meditation on Mount Kailash, his traditional abode.
Shiva is referred to as the good one or the auspicious one. Shiva as Rudra is considered to be the destroyer of evil and sorrow. Shiva as Shankara is the doer of good. Shiva is 'tri netra' (divine vision), and is 'neela kantha' (blue necked,having consumed the poison Halahala to save the world from destruction). Shiva as Nataraja is the Divine Cosmic Dancer. Shiva as Ardh narishvara is both man and woman.
He is both static and dynamic; both creator and destroyer. He is the oldest and the youngest; he is the eternal youth as well as the infant. He is the source of fertility in all living beings. He has gentle as well as fierce forms. Shiva is the greatest of renouncers as well as the ideal lover. He destroys evil and protects good. He bestows prosperity on worshipers although he is austere. He is omnipresent and resides in everyone as pure consciousness.
Shiva is inseparable from Parvati (also referred to as Shakti),the daughter of Himavaan and Haimavati. There is no Shiva without Shakti and no Shakti without Shiva;the two are one, the absolute state of being - consciousness and bliss.

[52] Omkar: The continous vibratory sound of Om or Aum: **Om** (also **Aum**, ॐ) is the most sacred syllable in Hinduism, symbolizing the infinite Brahman and the entire Universe. This syllable is sometimes called the "Udgitha" or "pranava mantra" (primordial mantra), because it is considered to be the primal sound, and because most mantras begin with it. In Hindu metaphysics, it is proposed that the manifested cosmos (from Brahman) has name and form (nama-rupa), and that the closest approximation to the name and form of the universe is Om, since all existence is fundamentally composed of vibration. (This concept of describing reality as vibrations, or rhythmic waves, can also be found in quantum physics and superstring theory, which describe the universe in terms of vibrating fields or strings.)

When Narhari was three months old, Amba took him on her lap to breastfeed. But she found that his hunger was not completely satisfied with her breast milk. Therefore, she asked her husband to arrange for cow's milk. Hearing these words of his mother, Narhari softly touched the breasts of his mother and miraculously, they were soon overflowing with milk.

As he grew, he was not able to speak anything except uttering the 'Omkar' chant. His parent's earnestly desired to hear his stammering words. Very often they tried to speak to him expecting to hear his indistinct words in return, but he used to smile and remain quiet. Years passed and Narhari always maintained his silence. His mother Amba became very nervous assuming that her son Narhari might actually be dumb. This thought gave her throbbing mental pain. Unable to bear the thought of the possibility of her Son being dumb, she started praying fervently. She was completely heart-broken with sorrow. In the meanwhile, Narhari observed his mother's sorrowful state and listened to her words as well.

Then, one fine day Narahari went near his mother, wiped her tears and touched a metallic utensil kept in a corner, with his hand. In an instant, the metallic utensil turned into Gold. His parents realised that this boy is not a common being, but indeed a superhuman. Yet, as a mother's heart, Amba was not satisfied without listening to the sweet words of her son. Therefore, Narahari convinced his mother and made signs that he would start talking after his thread ceremony.

Amba became very happy when she understood the meaning of these signs and carried out his thread ceremony with great pomp. People invited for the ceremony gossiped about how this dumb boy would chant the *Gayatri Mantra*[53]? His father taught him the sacred Vedic hymn, but Narahari did not utter a word. His parents lost all hopes.

Once all the sacrificial rituals were over, Narhari in his ascetic garb stood before his mother to receive alms according to the traditions. As soon as he received alms from his mother, Narahari instantly started uttering the *Rigveda*[54]. When he received

[53] Gayatri Mantra: The Gayatri Mantra is the most revered mantra in Hinduism (second only to the mantra Om). It consists of the prefix :*om bhūr bhuva svaha* , a formula taken from the Yajurveda, and the verse 3.62.10 of the Rigveda (which is an example of the Gayatri meter). Since all the other three Vedas contain much material rearranged from the Rig Veda, the Gayatri mantra is found in all the four Vedas. The deva invoked in this mantra is Savitar, and hence the mantra is also called **Sāvitrī**.
The Gayatri is seen as a Divine awakening of the mind and soul, and within it a way to reach the most Supreme form of existence, and the way to Union with Brahman. Understanding, and purely loving the essence of the Gayatri Mantra is seen by many, to be one, if not the most powerful ways to attain God.
Originally the personification of the mantra, the goddess Gayatri is considered the veda mata, the mother of all Vedas and the consort of the God Brahma and also the personification of the all-pervading Parabrahman, the ultimate unchanging reality that lies behind all phenomena. Gayatri Veda Mata is seen by many Hindus to be not just a Goddess, but a portrayal of Brahman himself, in the feminine form. Essentially, the Goddess is seen to combine all the phenomenal attributes of Brahman, including Past, Present and Future [Bhuh BHuvah Swah] as well as the 3 realms of existence. Goddess Gayatri is also worshipped as the Hindu Trimurti combined as one [Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva], and the image of her portrays her carrying all the 'objects' in the hands of each God of the Trimurti, symbolising the Divine creation, preservation and destruction as one omnipotent force

[54] Rigveda: The holiest Hindu Scripture. There are four Vedas-Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. It is one of the world's oldest religious texts. It was preserved over the centuries by oral tradition.

alms for the second time, Narahari started uttering Yajurveda and on receipt of the third set of alms, he started reciting samaveda. His parents were overjoyed. All the people present in the ceremony were astonished with this miracle and started glorifying Narhari with shouts of victory.

Once the thread ceremony was over, Narahari spoke to his mother "As per religious practice, after the thread ceremony one has to go to 'Kashi' (Banaras) for religious studies. Now I have to render service to my *Guru*[55] and then beg for alms. Hence please permit me to go to Banaras". Mother Amba was fully grief stricken after hearing this. She said, "Son, I was eagerly waiting since a long time to hear you speak. Today I felt myself blessed by hearing the Vedas from you. Under this circumstance, how can you think of going to Banaras? You are our only son. If you go to Banaras, who will look after us in this old age?" She started crying. Instilling confidence in her, Narahari said, "Mother, I am not born for household entanglement. I have to carry on the mission for which I have taken birth. You should continue to observe the religious vow of *Pradosh44* and you will be blessed with four more sons to look after both of you".

Then Narahari placed his hand on his mother's head and said, "Keep this as a secret. Do not divulge it to anyone". So saying Narahari blessed her with Divine Grace and soon mother Amba remembered everything about her previous birth. When this remembrance of the past birth slowly diminished, she regained herself and was again overcome by motherly affection. Then she realised that Narahari is indeed the reincarnation of Lord Sripad Srivallabh and was bent on accepting asceticism. So she prayed to him, "Wait until I get a second son and then I shall permit you to go to Banaras". Narahari replied, "why one? I shall wait until you have two sons. Are you happy now?"

Within a year, mother Amba gave birth to twin sons. After three months, Narahari spoke to his parents, "Both your sons are blessed with long life. You would get two more sons and a daughter. So now permit me to go on my mission. Now I am going to Badrika forest and after a period of thirty years, I will come back here to meet you". So saying Narahari took blessings from his parents and started on a long pilgrimage.

[55] Guru: Preceptor. The importance of finding a guru who can impart transcendental knowledge (vidyā) is one of the tenets of Hinduism. One of the main Hindu texts, the Bhagavad Gita, is a dialogue between God in the form of Krishna and Arjuna a nobleman. Not only does their dialogue outlines many of the ideals of Hinduism, but the discussion and relationship between the two considered to be an expression of the ideal Guru/disciple relationship. In the Gita itself, Krishna speaks of the importance of finding a guru to Arjuna:
Acquire the transcendental knowledge from a Self-realized master by humble reverence, by sincere inquiry, and by service. The wise ones who have realized the Truth will impart the Knowledge to you. (Bhagavad Gītā, c4 s34)
In the sense mentioned above, guru is used more or less interchangeably with "satguru" (literally: true teacher) and satpurusha. The disciple of a guru is called a sishya or chela. Often, a guru lives in an ashram or in a gurukula (the guru's household) together with his disciples. The lineage of a guru, spread by worthy disciples who carry on that guru's particular message, is known as the guru parampara or disciplic succession. The guru is the one who guides his or her disciple to become jivanmukta, the liberated soul able to achieve salvation in his or her lifetime through God-realization.

## Narhari's Asceticism

Narhari reached Badrika Forest, performed deep penance and then came to Banaras (Kashi, Varanasi). While in Banaras, he started practising devotion, worship and meditation. He maintained himself by collecting alms. In addition, Narahari gained so much expertise in *Vedas*, *Upanishad,*[56] and *Puranas*[57] that even the eminent learned men of Banaras started respecting him for his calibre. Though he was very young the learned men treated him as a senior most ascetic.

In Banaras, there was an elderly Guru named Krishna-Saraswati. He initiated Narhari according to rites prescribed by the scriptures. After his initiation, young Narahari became the super ascetic, Sri Narasinha Saraswati. He initiated major activities for the upliftment of religion and the welfare of mankind in Banaras.

Sri Narasinha Saraswati started for his pilgrimage after taking the kind permission and blessings from his Guru. After staying in *Badrikavan*[58] for some time, he came to the Sangama (Calcutta) and wandering around he reached *Prayag*[59]. There he came across a worthy disciple, Madhav. Both wandered together and later, Sri Narasinha Saraswati Swamiji (i.e. Sriguru) initiated Madhav. He named him as Madhav Saraswati. Madhav became the favourite disciple of Sriguru. Sriguru then went along with his seven disciples on pilgrimage and travelled through all the holy places in the country, Bharat. It was nearing thirty years since he had left home. Hence Sriguru thought of returning to his native place and meet his parents as promised.

[56] Upanishad: 108 Philosophical treatises that appear within Vedas. The **Upanishads** are part of the Hindu Shruti scriptures which primarily discuss meditation and philosophy and are seen as religious instructions by most forms of Hinduism. The very edifice of Indian religions (Hinduism,Jainism,and Budhism) is built on the strong foundation of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are mystic or spiritual interpretations on the Vedas, their putative end and essence, and thus known as Vedānta ("the end of the Vedas").

[57] Puranas: The **Puranas** (Sanskrit, purāṇá "ancient", since they focus on ancient history of the universe) are part of Hindu Smriti; these religious scriptures discuss varied topics like devotion to God in his various aspects, traditional sciences like Ayurveda, Jyotish, cosmology, concepts like dharma, karma, reincarnation and many others. The sage Vyasa is credited with compilation of Puranas from age (yuga) to age, and for the current age he has been identified and named Krishna Dvaipayana, the son of the sage Parashara.According to tradition the Puranas were written by Vyasa at the end of Dvapara Yuga. One of the main objectives of the Puranas was to make available the essence of the Vedas to the common man, and the Puranas were basically meant not for the scholars but for the ordinary man. They bring forth the Vedic knowledge and teachings by way of parables, allegories, stories, legends, life stories of kings and other prominent persons, and chronologies of historical events. The Puranas unfold the principles of Hinduism in a simple way.

Puranas are named after the three main forms of Brahman: Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Protector of Life and Humanity; and Shiva, the Destroyer.

Brahma Puranas: Brahma Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Vamana Purana.
Vishnu Puranas: (Harivansh) Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata Purana, Naradeya Purana, Garuda Purana, Padma Purana, Varaha Purana.
Shiva Puranas: Shiva Purana, Vayu purana, Linga Purana, Skanda Purana, Agni Purana, Matsya Purana, Kurma purana.

Apart from the above mentioned eighteen major Puranas, there are an equal number of subsidiary Puranas, called Upapuranas. They are: Sanatkumara, Narasimha, Brihannaradiya, Sivarahasya, Durvasa, Kapila, Vamana, Bhargava, Varuna, Kalika, Samba, Nandi, Surya, Parasara, Vasishtha, Devi-Bhagavata, Ganesa and Hamsa.

[58] Badrikavan: Badrika Forest
[59] Prayag: New name - Alahabad in Uttar Pradesh

## Meeting Parents

One day early in the morning *Sriguru*[60] reached Korangnagar in Akola District, Maharashtra and unexpectedly stood in the courtyard of his home. His parents always remembered their son Narhari since he had left home, but they were not able to recognise the ascetic Sriguru who came and stood in their courtyard. However, when they did recognise him, everyone from the house came for his blessings and worshipped him. Word spread around and the villagers started to come in for the blessings of Sriguru.

From within this crowd, his sister Ratna appeared and stood before him. She was seeing her brother for the first time. Sriguru realized that she desired to talk to him. Ratna laid herself down at his feet and said, "I would also like to do penance and get myself deeply involved in devotion". Sriguru answered,"Offering service to one's husband is the prime sacred duty for a woman. That itself is the real path to salvation". Ratna asked him, "What are all the happenings that would take place in my life?" Sriguru then replied, "In your past birth, you severely beat up a cow and created quarrels in your family by slandering. Hence now your husband would quarrel with you in this life and become an ascetic. You will suffer from white leprosy marks on your body, which would give you a lot of pain. But going through all these sufferings will wash away all your sins. You will then get my Divine blessings when you meet me in *Ganagapur*[61]".

A number of people from the village invited Sriguru to their homes for accepting alms. Sriguru did not want to turn anyone down for it might hurt their feelings. Therefore, he accepted everyone's invitation. He then visited everyone's home at the same time, as promised, in different forms and accepted their worship and alms. When people realized the fact that Sriguru was present in all their houses at the same instant, they were all simply shocked with this miracle.

## Ascetic Madhavaranya

Next day, Sriguru bid farewell to everyone and left his home. From Karanja, he went to Tryambakeshwar (Nashik District) and eventually went to Nashik (Maharashtra). After spending a night in Nashik, he went to Manjarika village located on the banks of River Godavari. An ascetic named Madhavaranya stayed in Manjarika. He was a great devotee of Sriguru Narasinha Saraswati. He was entirely absorbed in meditation and singing hymns praising his *tutelary deity*[62]*,* Narasinha Saraswati. Lord Narasinha Saraswati had blessed him with Divine Vision in his meditation. Very often he would see him in the form of a Divine ascetic, but Madhavaranya wanted to see him manifested in the form of a deity with attributes. The day when Sriguru reached Manjarika village, Madhavaranya had the Divine sight of Lord Narasinha Saraswati in his meditation. Madhavaranya was confused with these two forms. However, his confusion was resolved very soon when he saw his deity Narasinha Saraswati getting merged into the form of the Divine ascetic. At that very moment, Sriguru manifested himself in his presence and announced "Sriguru Devdatta" in a continuous deep sounding chant.

[60] Sriguru: (Lord) Sri Narasinha Saraswati
[61] Ganagapur: In Gulbarga, Karnatak State.
[62] Tutelary Deity: A **tutelary** spirit is a god, who serves as the guardian or watcher over a particular site, person, or nation.

When Madhavaranya opened his eyes he saw the same Divine ascetic who had came in his vision during meditation. He felt contented. Sriguru told him that Lord Narasinha Saraswati was highly pleased with him and he would soon be blessed with the Divine sight of the Lord.

## Brahmin prompted for committing suicide

From Manjarika village, Sriguru60 went ahead to another village named 'Vasar Brahmeshwar' also located on the banks of river Godavari. He was accompanied with his disciples. Early one morning when Sriguru was bathing in the river, he heard some noises in the riverbank. A Brahmin was moving restlessly, just like a fish out of water and screaming loudly. It seemed like he was experiencing severe pain. In spite of the pain, he had tied a big stone on his back and was about to drown himself in the river. Sriguru asked his disciples to bring the Brahmin to him.

The middle-aged Brahmin started conversing with the disciples. He said, "Why are you stopping me? I am unable to bear this acute stomach pain. Only death can relieve me from such a pain. I have tried all remedies. If I eat rice, it turns out like poison in my stomach. I don't know what sins I have committed in my past life to undergo such deadly pain". Ignoring everything he said, the disciples caught hold of him and brought him to Sriguru. The Brahmin then told Sriguru, "For the last ten years, I have been suffering from acute stomach pain. So, please permit me to commit suicide". Sriguru spoke "Do you feel that committing suicide would change your destiny and wipe out your sufferings? On the contrary, committing suicide would add to your sins and increase the sufferings in your next life. Take for granted that you have already endured for the sins of your past life and you will get my blessings. Be assured that you will be cured of your acute stomach pain with immediate effect. Today I will feed you with very delicious food".

At the same time an officer of that village was going in the river to take bath. As soon as he saw Sriguru, he offered his obeisance and expressed his desire to offer some devotional service. The officer was a Brahmin of Koudinya *Gotra*[63] from Apastambh branch. His name was Sayamdeo. He said, "I am working for a Yavan[64] *Subhedar*[65]". I am very fortunate to get your blessings and hence I pray for your kind grace to allow me to offer my devotional service to you".

Sriguru pointed at the sick Brahmin and spoke to Sayamdeo "Take this Brahmin suffering from acute stomach pain to your house and feed him delicious food until he is satisfied". Then Sayamdeo prayed to Sriguru, "Kindly bless my house with your Divine presence along with your disciples and accept my alms".

Sriguru gracefully accepted Sayamdeo's request. That same afternoon Sriguru graced Sayamdeo's house with his visit. Sayamdeo and his wife welcomed Sriguru with

[63] Gotra: Lineage. 'Gotra' may be defined as a concept of patrilineal classification and identification of various families of a caste.
[64] Yavan: Muslim
[65] Subedar: Officer

great devotion and worshipped him in *shodashopachar* [66] way by seating him on a silver bench. Everyone present was satisfied. The sick Brahmin was also satisfied as he could enjoy the delicious food after a period of nearly ten years.

## Protection to Sayamdeo

Sayamdeo then prostrated at the feet of Sriguru for his blessings. Sensing his devotion, Sriguru blessed him and said, "You are fully devoted to me and hence you will get freedom from all anxieties". Sriguru then returned back to his original place.

Around sunset, Sayamdeo received a call from his *Yavan Subhedar*. Sayamdeo became very nervous since it was known that the cruel Subhedar wanted to kill a Brahmin. Therefore, this call meant death for Sayamdeo. Counting the last moments of his life, Sayamdeo summoned unto Sriguru throughout the night. In the morning, he approached Sriguru and gave him all the details. Listening to his story, Sriguru said, "You are my devotee. Nobody can kill my devotee. Go and undoubtedly meet the Subhedar. I shall wait here until you return". Sayamdeo returned home after getting this assurance from Sriguru.

Next morning he went to meet the Subhedar. He was a bit late and therefore the Subhedar had become insane out of anger. He had already started throwing abuses at Sayamdeo. As soon as he saw Sayamdeo, he went ahead to kill him. But suddenly he shrank due to fear and returned to his room. His whole body was undergoing a burning sensation. There was severe pain in his chest. He felt as if a Brahmin was cutting his flesh, inch by inch. When he remembered Sayamdeo, he came out of the room staggering and still in pain. Sayamdeo was standing outside, thinking & praying to Sriguru. The Subhedar fell down at Sayamdeo's feet and said, "I request for your shelter. Please protect me. It was a big mistake calling you here. Please forgive me". Then the Subhedar went inside the room and came out with a necklace of jewels, gold coins and gave them to Sayamdeo as a gift and requested him to go home.

Sayamdeo left from the Subhedar's place and went directly to Sriguru. Amazed with the kind grace of Sriguru, he prostrated at his feet. Seeing his faith, Sriguru told him, "Always maintain this strong devotion". Sayamdeo prayed to Sriguru "I want to offer my services at your feet. I pray that you take me along with you". Then Sriguru said, "Stay here for now. After fifteen years, you will be able to get my Divine grace". Thus blessing him, Sriguru went ahead to continue on his pilgrimage.

Further, he reached "Parali Vaijanath". By then, Sriguru's fame had spread everywhere. A large number of people started visiting him to pay their obeisance. It became difficult for Sriguru to carry on his worship or meditation. Therefore Sriguru ordered all his disciples to proceed on pilgrimage and he decided to find a solitary place for himself and live in solitude. So finally he left "Parali Vaijanath" to continue his worship and meditation.

[66] Shodashopachar: Very Elaborate way of worshipping a deity. It incorporates 16 different constituents in worshipping a deity, they are:- Awahana, Asana, Padya, Arghya, Achamana, Snana, Vastra, Yadnayopaweet, Gandha, Pushpa, Dhoop, Deepa, Naivedya, Dakshina, Pradakshina, Mantra, Pushpa.

## The Brahmin's dull son

In Bhilwadi Village (Sangli, Maharashtra), located on river Krishna, there is a temple of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari. Sriguru passed four months of *Chaturmas*[67] under an *Audumber*[68] tree on the western bank of this river.

There was an old Brahmin who stayed in Kolhapur, Maharashtra and was well versed in the Vedas and the Shastras. A son was born to him at this old age, but his son was a dullard by birth. Both the parents were so distressed with the undeveloped mental state of their son that they died out of shock. The boy became an orphan and started wandering from place to place. The Brahmins in the village performed his thread ceremony, so that he would be able to maintain himself by collecting alms. They also thought this might infuse some common sense and understanding in him.

Unfortunately, there was no change in the boy's condition. There was no improvement in his dullness. Everyone censured and despised him wherever he went. He was so much ashamed that he left the village and wandered about until he finally reached Bhilwadi village where the temple of Goddess Bhuvaneshwari is located. He entered the temple, sat in front of the Goddess and prayed continuously for three days without any food and water. Out of repentance he cut his tongue, offered it to the Goddess and said "Mother, if you do not give me your 'Darshan' and liberate me from this pain, I shall cut my head as an offering at your feet". At night, the Goddess appeared in his dream and said "Wake up. One has to endure the sins of one's past birth. I cannot change the fate of a person. Only a *Sadguru*[69] can do it. You will find such a Guru on the other side of the river under an Audumber tree. Please go to him".

The Brahmin boy went to the other side of the river and saw Sriguru seated under an Audumber tree, absorbed in deep meditation. He prostrated himself at the feet of Sriguru. Sriguru opened his eyes and looked at him. But because his tongue was severed, the boy could not speak. He showed his open mouth to Sriguru and then started crying loudly. The ever-compassionate Sriguru moved his hand on the boy's back and lo! The boy's tongue was restored miraculously. The boy while crying prayed to Sriguru "Bless me with intelligence and knowledge". The compassionate Sriguru blessed the boy again and there was a second miracle. The boy was endowed with intelligence and knowledge. He started uttering the 'Vedas'. When people came to know about this miracle, they glorified Sriguru with joy.

[67] Chaturmas: Period of four months covered between Ashadha Shuddha Ekadashi to Kartik Shuddha Ekadashi as per Hindu calendar and July to November as per English calendar

[68] Audumbar: Glomerous Fig tree. Always associated with Lord Dattatreya. Also known as Udumbar Tree.

[69] Sadguru: **Sadguru** means true guru (Sanskrit: sat=true), literally: true teacher. The title means that his students have faith that the guru can be trusted and will lead them to moksha, enlightenment or inner peace. It is based on a long line of Hindu philosophical understandings of the importance of knowledge and that the teacher, guru, is the sacred conduit to self-realization.

## At the confluence Of Krishna - Panchganga River

Due to this event, Sriguru's fame spread everywhere. Throughout the day, people visited him to pay obeisance and narrate their difficulties. This again started creating a disturbance in Sriguru's meditation. Therefore, one day he left the place quietly and wandered until he reached Narsinhawadi village at the confluence of the two rivers - Krishna and Panchganga. The Panchganga consists of five rivers viz. Shiva, Bhadra, Bhogavati, Kumbhi, and Saraswati. There was a dense forest surrounding this confluence and hence Sriguru decided to sit under an Audumbar tree for meditation. This place is located on the western bank of river Krishna. In front of this place, on the eastern bank of the river, there is a holy place called Amarapur (Aurwad). A temple of Lord Kashi Vishveshwar is located in this holy place. Sixty-four *Yoginis*[70] resided in this location. Sriguru stayed on the western bank under the Audumbar tree and every afternoon he would cross the river to Amarapur, take blessings from Lord Amareshwar (Kashi Vishveshwar), collect alms in the village and return to his abode on the western bank of the river.

## Devotee of Amarapur Favoured

A poor Brahmin lived in Amarapur. He was a great devotee of Lord Dattatreya. However, due to poverty it was extremely difficult for him to make ends meet. In Amarapur he maintained himself by collecting alms from people. A large amount of bean-pod creepers had grown in his courtyard. The days when he did not get any alms, his family would survive eating cooked bean-pods.

One day, Sriguru suddenly came and stood at the Brahmin's doorstep. The Brahmin welcomed him with devotion. Unfortunately he had no food available in his home that day. So the Brahmin offered Sriguru cooked beans and prayed for forgiveness. Sriguru was fully satisfied with the Brahmins devotion and said, "Take for granted that from today onwards your poverty has disappeared". After saying so, Sriguru left the house. The bean pod creeper had grown so thick in the courtyard that one had to bend his head to cross the courtyard. Sriguru destroyed that thickly grown creeper with his own hands. When the means of their livelihood was destroyed, the Brahmani75 and her children started crying loudly. They started reproaching Sriguru. However, the Brahmin was very sensible. He said, "One should be satisfied with whatever that is available. Sriguru is omniscient. There is certainly some reason for him to destroy the bean creepers."

Then the Brahmin started getting rid of the broken creepers. He started digging to uproot the creepers. As he dug with his axe, there was a sound like striking metal. When the Brahmin used more force and dug up, he saw a big vessel lying at the root of the creeper. He found that the metallic vessel was filled with gold coins. The Brahmin's

[70] Yoginis: Its literal meaning is a demoness or a sorceress. The word is used to refer to advanced female yoga practitioners. In a wider and general context, a yogini is believed to be women who possess supernatural powers. During Durga's battles with the demons (asurs) eight yoginis are described who emanated from the body of Durga, and they assisted her in the battle, Later, the number of Yoginis increased to sixty-four. All these yoginis represented forces of vegetation and fertility, illness and death, Yoga and magic. All yogins are worshipped collectively and together, each one is enshrined in an individual position in a circular temple open to the sky.
One of the most impressive yogini temples is the 9th century Chaunsath yogini (sixty-four yogini) temple is located at Hirapur, Bhubaneshvar district, Orissa. Other two important yogini temples are the 10th century monuments at Khajuraho, near Chhattarpur and Bheraghat, near Jabalpur, both in Madhya Pradesh.

poverty disappeared permanently. The whole family approached Sriguru. They prayed for forgiveness. Sriguru was pleased and said to them, "Be happy now. Goddess Laxmi (Goddess of wealth) has arrived in your house. But don't talk about this incident with anyone, because I want to remain in this place with peace of mind". Even today in Amarapur (Aurwad) one can find the family lineage of this Brahmin. There is now a temple built in place of the creepers in the courtyard.

## Audumbar Tree

**Sriguru had made his residence under an Audumbar tree in front of Aurwad (Amarapur) on the confluence of Krishna-Panchaganga Rivers. Audumbar is a holy tree. As per mythology, Lord Vishnu had taken avatar[71] of Narasimha[72] and tore out the stomach of Demon Hiranyakashyapu, Pralhad's father, using his nails to protect his devotee Pralhad. As a result there was severe burning sensation in Narasimha's nails. This burning sensation was cured using the fruits of an Audumbar tree. Hence Lord Vishnu had blessed the Audumbar tree that worshipping this tree would was one's sins away. Sriguru had made his residence under such a tree. Hence wherever Lord Dattatrey dwells, there is always an Audumbar tree and wherever there is an Audumbar tree, there always dwells Lord Dattatrey.**

## Yoginees of Amareshwar

Sixty-four Yoginees lived in front of Amareshwar at the confluence of rivers krishna-Panchaganga. Every afternoon these Yoginees came out of the river to pay their obeisance to Sriguru. They bowed their heads at the feet of Sriguru and offered flower garlands. They would take him from his hermitage with great devotion to worship him offer him alms. They followed this routine everyday.

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[71] Avatar: An **avatar** most commonly refers to the incarnation (bodily manifestation) of a higher being (deva), or the Supreme Being (God) onto planet Earth. It usually implies a deliberate descent into lower realms of existence for special purposes.

[72] Narasimha: Half Man-Half Lion Avatar of Lord Vishnu. In a previous avatar, (Varaha), Vishnu killed the rakshasa Hiranyaksha. Hiranyaksha's brother Hiranyakashipu, greatly angered by this, starts to abhor Lord Vishnu and His followers. Further, he decides to put an end to Vishnu by gaining magical powers by performing a penance for Brahma. Brahma, pleased with his tough penance, appears before him and agrees to grant a boon. Hiranyakashipu asks for a tricky boon from Brahma: that he would not die on earth or in space, nor in fire or water, neither during the day nor at night, neither inside a building nor outside, not by the hand of a human, god, animal, nor by any animate or inanimate being. This virtually no-death boon to Hiranyakashipu makes him arrogant enough to conquer the entire world, not caring that it means severe trouble and torture for common people, munis and followers of Vishnu.
Meanwhile, while Hiranyakashipu is away for the penance, divine sage Narada preaches about the sweetness of reciting Vishnu's name to Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahlada, while he is still in his mother's womb. Thus, Prahlada is born a very devoted follower of Vishnu, the youngest ardent devotee of Vishnu.
Hiranyakashipu fails in convincing his son to join him against Vishnu, and therefore tries to kill him in many ways, but each time Prahlada is protected by Vishnu himself. When asked, Prahlada refuses to acknowledge his father as the supreme lord of the universe and claims that Vishnu is omnipresent. Once Hiranyakashipu points to a particular pillar and asks if Vishnu is in it; Prahlada answers, "He was, He is and He will be". Hiranyakashipu, unable to control his anger, smashes the pillar, and Vishnu in the form of **Narasimha** comes from it. In order to kill Hiranyakashipu, who cannot be killed by human, god or animal, Narasimha is partly all three: a god incarnate as a part-human, part-animal. He comes upon Hiranyakashipu at twilight (when it is neither day nor night) on the threshold of a courtyard (neither indoors nor out), and puts the demon on his lap (neither earth nor space). Using his nails (neither animate nor inanimate) as weapons, he disembowels and kills the demon.

There was no other settlement near the Audumbar tree. People from the nearby Shirol village were rather surprised that Sriguru never came to their village to collect alms. They were mystified as to how he was sustaining himself without food in that dense forest. Some mischievous people from the village tried to find out the truth and sent a person to investigate. This person hid nearby Sriguru's hermitage and watched the Yoginees pray and offer to Sriguru. He was practically scared watching this scene and immediately fled from there.

## Favour Shown To Ganganuj Farmer

A farmer named Ganganuj was guarding his fields. One day, he saw these sixty-four Yoginees. They came out of the river and took Sriguru along with them to cross the river. Surprisingly, the flow of river split in two parts leaving space for Sriguru and the Yoginees to easily cross over to the other side. Once they crossed over, the flow of the river resumed back to its normal flow. Watching this wonderful event, Ganganuj was amazed with delight. He realised that Sriguru himself is God. Next day in the afternoon he again hid near the Audumbar tree. The Yoginees came and started taking Sriguru along with them. Ganganuj followed as if mesmerized by them. The Yoginees entered the water along with Sriguru and reached there under water city. There they seated Sriguru on a throne and worshipped him. Hiding near the door, Ganganuj witnessed the divine festival. Suddenly, Sriguru caught the sight of Ganganuj and called him near. Ganganuj was startled and said "Oh! Lord, please forgive me. Yesterday I had witnessed this rare scene of your Divine Grace accompanying the Yoginees. Today too when I came to witness this rare scene, I could not control myself and therefore, followed your Divine Grace as though pulled up here. Please forgive me and uplift me with your blessings".

Sriguru was pleased to see the clean and innocent mind of Ganganuj. Sriguru said, "You have come here with fully devoted sentiments. As of today your poverty will vanish and you will live happily. Do not pass on this information to anyone else". After arranging meals for Ganganuj, Sriguru returned to his dwelling at the Audumbar tree. After taking the blessings from Sriguru Ganganuj returned home. The same day, while working in his field Ganganuj struck a hidden treasure and his poverty vanished forever. After this, on a daily basis he visited Sriguru and offered his services thus getting absorbed in deep devotion.

Once, the innocent farmer prayed to Sriguru "During *Maghi Poornima*[73], one gets lot of religious merit by taking bath in the holy waters of Prayag (now Allahabad) located on the *Sangam*[74]*"*. The compassionate Sriguru said, "sit on my tiger skin and close your eyes". As soon as Ganganuj sat and closed his eyes the tiger skin flew up in the sky and started flying with great speed. Very soon, Sriguru and Ganganuj reached Prayag. After taking bath in Prayag, Sriguru took him to Kashi (Benaras). After taking blessings of Lord Vishveshwar at Kashi, Sriguru took Ganganuj to Gaya in Bihar State.

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[73] Maghi Poornima: Full moon day in the month of Magha as per Hindu calendar and January or February as per English calendar

[74] Sangam: Confluence of the Rivers Ganga and Panchganga. Typically Sriguru was known to dwell under a Audumbar Tree at the Sangam. Henceforth this dwelling place is commonly referred to as the Sangam.

After visiting all the three holy places, Prayag, Kashi and Gaya on the same day, Sriguru returned to his dwelling place at the Audumbar tree with Ganganuj. The farmer was fully satisfied and felt accomplished with his objective. He was thrilled to narrate the entire incident to his family after going home.

## Departure from Narsinhawadi

The news spread throughout the village in no time and everyone started visiting to pay their obeisance to Sriguru. Each one narrated their tale of woe to Sriguru and prayed for a favour. With each day, the number of visitors kept on increasing. Therefore Sriguru decided to leave this place too. Devotees became upset when they heard the news. The Yoginees were also perturbed. Finally, Sriguru convinced everyone saying, "Do not grieve. I will always dwell under this Audumbar tree and fulfil the wishes of all my devotees. This Audumbar tree is my Divine settlement. Whoever worships this Divine place would always get my blessings". Sriguru then departed from this place and manifested himself at Ganagapur, which is located on the banks of Bhima River.

The Audumbar tree still exists at the confluence of Krishna Panchganga Rivers. Sriguru's Padukas (an impression of the lotus feet) are installed under this tree. This place has been turned into a pilgrimage bustling with devotees and is now known as "Narasinhawadi" (Kolhapur district). Even today Sriguru, Narasinha Saraswati, the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya dwells here and thousands of devotees experience his kind favours.

## Fate Erased

Sriguru had promised his devotees that he would be divinely residing at the Audumbar tree in the place now called as 'Narasinhawadi'. Devotees even now experience his divine presence and miracles.

A Brahmin named Gangadhar lived in Shirol village near Narasinhawadi. His wife was very virtuous. She gave birth to five children, but each one died within a few days after birth. They didn't even survive until their naming ceremony. The Brahmin couple was very unhappy. They prayed to all deities with earnestness to seek a child, but all efforts were in vain. Once they both approached a well-known astrologer. He told them that in the past life, the *Brahmani*[75] had borrowed gold coins from a Brahmin of Shonan *gotra*, but never returned it back. Therefore the Brahmin belonging to the *Shonan gotra* gave up and committed suicide. After the suicide, he became a ghost and destroys all her children. Since the Brahmin was childless, no one had carried out his funeral rites after his death. Therefore, he suggested that they complete all his funeral rites, donate the loan amount to a Brahmin and offer services to Sriguru in order to wipe out the effects of their sins.

The Brahmani said, "I do not have wealth equal to a hundred gold coins. I am even unable to perform all the funeral rites of the Brahmin. However, I will complete

[75] Brahmani: Wife of a Brahmin

the funeral rites as much as possible. For a month I will stay at the confluence of Krishna-Panchganga Rivers and offer my devotional services to Sriguru". The very next day she reached Narasinhawadi. Everyday she would bathe in the 'Teerth" and devotionally worship the *Padukas*[76] of Sriguru and the Audumber tree. While carrying out the *Parikrama*[77] around the Audumber tree, she would continuously chant "Digambara, Digambara, Sripad Vallabh Digambara".

On the third night she had a dream with the ghost demanding for his money. He threatened her, "If you don't return my money, I shall eliminate all members of your family". Saying that, the ghost raised a weapon and came to attack her. Fear gripped the Brahmin lady and she started running towards the Audumbar tree. At that very moment, she saw the compassionate Sriguru personally standing in front of her. She went and laid herself down at the lotus feet of Sriguru. Sriguru assured her of protection. He asked the ghost, "Why do you want to kill this poor lady? ". The ghost replied "Oh Lord! This lady had borrowed a hundred gold coins in my past birth. She did not return the money in that birth. I died out of grief and became a ghost. If she returns my money, I would silently leave without harassing her anymore". Then Sriguru replied, "This lady is my devotee. You cannot harass her anymore. Whatever little amount she can manage to give you, take that and go away silently. Only then you will you be liberated from this state and the lady would also become happy. If you get entangled in this web of money, you will never be liberated from this state of being a ghost".

The ghost accepted his suggestion. Then Sriguru told the Brahmin lady "You should perform the *Dashapindi*[78] funeral rites of this ghost. It will not only liberate the ghost from its origin, but it will also make you happy. Take bath in the holy water here and then perform the funeral rites. For seven days you bath the Audumbar tree with this holy water. Then all your sins would be washed away".

After saying so, Sriguru disappeared. The ghost also vanished. Then the Brahmin lady awakened from her dream. She narrated the entire conversation to her husband and as per Sriguru's orders performed the Dashpindi funeral rites of the ghost, took the blessings of Lord Amareshwar and then stayed at Narasinhawadi for the night. That night Sriguru again appeared in her dream and offered her two coconuts. She ate those coconuts and returned home. In due time, she gave birth to two sons with the kind blessings of Sriguru.

After a few years, they decided to perform the thread ceremony of their elder son who was five years old and the tonsure ceremony of their three-year-old. Unfortunately, just a day before the ceremony, the younger son died due to a tetanus infection. With the untimely death of their younger son, his parents were struck by grief were completely heart broken. The Brahmin lady started beating her head. The villagers' came to collect the body for the funeral rites, but she did not allow them to touch the dead body. An entire day passed, but she remained adamant.

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[76] Paduka: The impressions of the lotus feet of a true Guru, either on stone or wooden or metal (usually silver) sandals.
[77] Parikrama: Circumambulation
[78] Dashapindi: The oblations collectively to the manes of a deceased ancestor which are offered daily from the first day of his decease until the tenth or which are offered together on the tenth

At this time a celibate boy arrived from nowhere. He tried his best to convince the Brahmin lady, but in vain. The grief-stricken mother could not grasp the higher principles of the *Vedas*. The lady said, "I don't want to listen to anybody. Sriguru had promised me in front of the Audumbar tree at the confluence of Krishna-Panchganga Rivers, that both my sons would have long life". Then the celibate boy, who was none other than Sriguru himself in that form said, "If your devotion is really true, then Sriguru himself would show you the right path. You should go back to that Audumbar tree".

Accordingly the Brahmin lady took her dead son to the Audumbar tree. She laid down the dead body in front of the 'Padukas' of Sriguru and then in an afflicted tone started chanting loudly the name of Sriguru for help. In that state of grief, she dozed off and had a dream. In the dream, Lord Narasinha Saraswati appeared before her and said, "My words were true. Do not blame me. As per your son's fate, he had to live up to a hundred years. However, in your fate there is separation from your son. But, I shall wipe out this aspect of your fate and make your son alive". After saying so, he puffed out holy ash from his mouth.

Soon the lady woke up from her slumber and to her surprise saw her son crying. There was happiness all over. The villagers' gathered and bowed before the 'Padukas' with great devotion. Then they gave holy bath to the 'Padukas' as well as to the Audumbar tree and worshipped the same with great devotion. They all offered their prayers to Lord Narsinha Sarswati for pardoning them and sang in praise of the Lord. Everyone realised that even after his departure from this place, he still divinely manifests there. If one worships him with true devotion, Sriguru certainly changes the fate of the person for the better. Even today, lakhs of devotees come to Narasinhawadi to seek the blessings of Sriguru and get their desires fulfilled. Depending on their devotional service and faith, their wishes do get fulfilled.

## Arrival In Ganagapur

After departing from Narasinhawadi, Sriguru reached the dense forest at the confluence of rivers Bhima & Amaraja. Ganagapur village was located nearby. He carried out his daily religious rituals at the confluence without any hindrance. Every afternoon, he went to Ganagapur for collecting alms.

## Buffalo Not Giving Milk

One day when collecting alms, Sriguru reached a poor Brahmin's house in Ganagapur. The Brahmin had already left to collect his daily alms from different homes. Therefore, his wife paid obeisance to Sriguru and offered him a seat. She said, "My husband has gone to the village to collect alms. He would return shortly. I will offer you alms after his return". Sriguru said, "I am very hungry. If you do not have alms, then give me milk. I saw a buffalo in your courtyard". Hearing this, she replied with tears in her eyes,"Respected sir, there is no milk in the house. This buffalo is unable to give milk. She is very old and is just like the other he-buffaloes; people hire her to carry

earth load". Then Sriguru said, "I do not agree that this buffalo is barren. Go and milk her". Therefore, to respect the words of Sriguru, the Brahmin lady went near the buffalo with a pot and started milking her. And to her great surprise the barren buffalo started giving milk. She immediately warmed the milk and offered the same to Sriguru. Sriguru drank the warm milk and with satisfaction he said, "I am very satisfied with the contentedness between you and your husband. Even in poverty, you have maintained virtue and righteousness. Your poverty will come to an end from this moment and *Goddess Laxmi*[79] will bestow her blessings on your family". After blessing her, Sriguru went away.

When the Brahmin returned home, his wife narrated the whole story. She showed him the milk. Then both husband and wife came to the confluence and worshipped Sriguru with great devotion. They returned home singing praises in the honour of Sriguru.

## The King Of Ganagapur

The news spread like wind in the entire village. The village Officer conveyed this news to the King. The King was amazed. He thought *no human being could make a barren buffalo produce milk. This is definitely a miracle. It is certain that Sriguru is the incarnation of God. I have to prostrate at his feet. To my great fortune, Sriguru has made his abode in my kingdom*.

Therefore, the King paid a personal visit to the Brahmin's house. He was very excited to listen the story about the barren buffalo producing milk. He touched the feet of the Brahmin and said, "You are really a virtuous person and therefore Sriguru personally came and blessed you. Sriguru desired that you should be freed from poverty. Hence I shall give you twenty acres of fertile land immediately. I got this inspiration from Sriguru only. Please take me to Sriguru".

The King, along with a huge procession continuously glorifying Sriguru reached the confluence. As soon as he saw Sriguru, he went running with bare feet and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sriguru. With great devotion, he worshipped Sriguru with a lamp ceremony. Sriguru was very satisfied. He asked the King "What do you expect? ". The King prayed with humbleness, "Maharaj, I pray that you should have your abode at Ganagapur. I shall raise a Temple-Shrine for you. Then I shall get your blessings daily. The Temple-Shrine will be equipped with all facilities. For the daily religious ceremonials, you shall be able to go in a palanquin. This kingdom belongs to you and I shall look after your kingdom as your representative". Sriguru accepted the King's prayer. Then people brought Sriguru to Ganagapur with all the fanfare in a flower-decked palanquin, with the entire procession dancing and continuously glorifying Sriguru. In fact, it was like a great festival being celebrated with joy everywhere.

[79] Goddess Laxmi: Goddess of Wealth

## Deliverance of the Brahmin's Ghost

There was an ancient holy fig tree on the path going from the confluence of Krishna - Panchganga River to Ganagapur. A *Brahma-rakshas*[80] resided on this tree. This ghost was known to slay people and so none would go near the tree. No one even had the courage to walk along the path, which went by the tree. When Sriguru's palanquin came near the tree, the ghost came down from the tree, prostrated at the lotus feet of Sriguru, and prayed "Oh, Lord! I am a great sinner. I have slayed a number of people; therefore I have been born as a ghost. It is my great fortune that I have been blessed by your visit. Please bless me for my deliverance from this ghost life". Then Sriguru told that ghost "By chanting gods name go and take bath at the confluence of Krishna-Panchganga Rivers. Then you shall get the deliverance". With the blessings of Sriguru and chanting Gods name, the ghost ran towards the confluence. After taking bath at the confluence the ghost got deliverance.

A grand welcome awaited Sriguru in Ganagapur. People honoured him by washing and worshipping his lotus feet. The village was decorated with festoon of flowers and green leaves. Flags were hoisted everywhere. With the abode of Sriguru, Ganagapur became a holy place. Within few days a Temple-Shrine was raised in the honour of Sriguru. In the Temple-Shrine, celebrations of festivals, *Namsmaran*[81], *kirtan*[82] and other religious ceremonies were being carried out. Here too people started to witness the miraculous works of Sriguru.

## Trivikram Bharati

Ganagapur exhibited great pomp and show in honour of Sriguru. In a nearby village Kumasi stayed a learned Brahmin named Trivikram Bharati. He was very well versed in the Vedas. He was also a great devotee of Lord Narsinha. He would meditate on Lord Narsinha on a daily basis. When he heard about the royal pomp and show being put up in honour of Sriguru, he started criticising Sriguru in a slanderous way. He would say, "What is the necessity of this royal pomp and show for an ascetic? An ascetic has to go on foot and only a Sadguru should take a palanquin. Musical instruments and servants do not grace an ascetic".

Sriguru by intuition came to know everything uttered by Trivikram Bharati. So one day Sriguru told the king "I desire to visit the village Kumasi". Then the King accompanied Sriguru to the village Kumasi along with the Royal entourage of elephants, horses, and soldiers.

The same day Trivikram was trying to meditate on Lord Narsinha, but Lord Narsinha's figure did not manifest in his meditation. Lord Narsinha was also the household deity of his family. Trivikram Bharati became restless, as he did not get his usual blessings by way of Lord Narsinha's vision . He started praying to Lord Narsinha in an afflicted tone "Oh! Lord! Please favour me with your Darshan in my meditation". He tried again and again to meditate. Eventually in place of Lord Narsinha he could see the luminous personality of an ascetic. A bit later when he came out of his house he

[80] Brahma-rakshas: A haughty, disdainful spirit of a Brahmin.
[81] Namsmaran: The continuous repetition of God's name (or Sadguru's name).
[82] Kirtan: Narration of a topic, generally spiritual in nature, punctuated by music.

saw a big procession coming his way. He saw the King seated in a palanquin and Lord Narsinha seated in the second palanquin. He prostrated in front of the palanquin and offered salutation to his family deity Lord Narasinha. When he looked up he saw Sriguru adorning the seat of Lord Narsinha! Even the people in the procession appeared in the form of Sriguru. He was spellbound. He clung on to the lotus feet of Sriguru and with folded hands prayed, "Oh! Lord, please reconcile all these forms and grace me with your 'Darshan' in your original form". Then Sriguru reconciled all his forms and manifested in the form of Lord Narsinha. With tears of joy in his eyes Trivikram Bharati washed the lotus feet of Lord Narsinha.

Then Sriguru spoke "You are slandering me as a hypocrite. Do you think that all this pomp is for me? For me, soil and gold are the same. For me, to live in a King's palace or in the shade of a tree at the confluence are both equally good. I am thirsty for devotion. All this pomp is for the sake of the devotees and only their happiness". Hearing these words Trivikram Bharati prayed to Sriguru for forgiveness. He also prayed to Sriguru for his deliverance from this world. Sriguru was very much pleased with his devotion. He said, "I am pleased with your devotion. You shall definitely get deliverance". Trivikram Bharati desired to go to Ganagapur along with Sriguru to offer his devotional service but Sriguru ordered him to stay in Kumasi village and offer his devotional service.

## Arrogance of Hypocrite Brahmin

A Muslim king ruled Vidur. He was very cruel and hated the Hindu community. He would slander the Brahmin community and the holy Vedas. He would invite Brahmins and pay them money to get the Holy Vedas read in the royal court. He would arrange for discussions on the Holy Vedas and poke fun at both, the Brahmins and the Holy Vedas alike. Therefore the Brahmins with high integrity would never go to the royal court to read the Holy Vedas. Those attending the royal court would get money, but only at the cost of defaming the Hindu religion.

For the lure of money Brahmins from far–off places started coming to Vidur. For this same reason, two Brahmins from a distant place came to the royal court. They were greedy and their only intention was to make money. They were very arrogant and at the same time they did not have deep knowledge about the Vedas. They would debate on the holy Vedas with other Brahmins and defeat them. Then they would collect Victory certificate from the defeated Brahmins to prove their superiority.

They collected several such victory-certificates and finally arrived at the royal court of the King of Vidur. They told the King "We are fully conversant with all the four holy Vedas. We have reached here after defeating the Brahmins of every village. Please see these victory-certificates. Now we would like to challenge the Brahmins of your Kingdom. Invite all the learned Brahmins of your Kingdom and lets see the result". This turned out to be a great opportunity for the King to slander the holy Vedas and the Brahmin community. Therefore, he arranged for a special court regarding the holy Vedas and invited all the Brahmins of his Kingdom. Then he addressed them "These two learned Brahmins have come to our kingdom. Whoever defeats them in the debate on

the holy Vedas, would be presented with lots of money and respect. Else these two Brahmins would be honoured as having the most authority on the holy Vedas".

The Brahmins of the kingdom observed that these two Brahmins were arrogant and hypocritical. In addition, it was their (the two Brahmins) excessive greediness for money, which made them ignore righteousness and get ready to recite the holy Vedas in the royal court. With this awareness, the Brahmins of the royal court decided not to take part in the debate and told the king "these two Brahmins are really superior to us. So please go ahead and honour them". Then the king honoured those two Brahmins with lot of money, clothes, and further respected them with a royal treatment on a well-decorated elephant ride. With all this honour, the two Brahmins became more intoxicated with arrogance.

After a few days, the two Brahmins decided to roam through the entire Kingdom and hold discussions on the Holy Vedas with other Brahmins. Therefore, they took the necessary orders from the King and set out on a victory-tour. After reaching each village, they would invite the Brahmins and get them to either hold a debate on the holy Vedas or accept defeat and hand over a Victory certificate. Thus wandering, these Brahmins reached village Kumasi where Trivikram Bharati, the disciple of Sriguru was staying. Both these Brahmins approached Trivikram Bharati. He said, "I am an ascetic. I have not studied the Holy Vedas entirely. How can I hold a debate with you regarding Holy Vedas? For me winning or losing this debate would be the same". Then those Brahmins demanded for a victory certificate from him.

Trivikram Bharati was trying to convince them, but they started insisting about the victory certificate. Finally Trivikram Bharati addressed both Brahmins "let us go to Ganagapur where my Guru resides. Let us settle about this victory certificate in front of my Guru". Therefore, he took both Brahmins to Ganagapur. Trivikram Bharati prostrated at the feet of Sriguru, took his blessings, and stated all the facts. Then Sriguru convinced the two Brahmins "Do not be arrogant about your victory. Even God could not reach the depth of the Holy Vedas and *Vedanta*[83]". The two Brahmins refused to get convinced and thought that Sriguru is afraid of losing the debate. Therefore, they started to challenge him. They were bent on getting the victory certificate. Then Sriguru said, "It is alright. I will fulfil your strong desire for a debate". Then Sriguru looked around. He saw a person walking on the other side of the street. Sriguru sent his disciples to bring the person to him. Then, Sriguru asked the person "which caste do you belong to?' He replied, "Maharaj, I belong to Matanga community. It is my great fortune that I could get your blessings from such nearness". The person prostrated before Sriguru.

Sriguru asked his disciples to draw seven lines apart, each at an arm's length distance, in front of the person (Matanga). Then Sriguru spoke to him "Do not be afraid.

[83] Vedanta: The theological part of the Vedas, i.e. Upanishad. **Vedanta** means the anta or culmination or essence of the Vedas. It is a principal branch of Hindu philosophy. Literally, the end of the Vedas is constituted by the series of literature termed as the Aranyakas (the forest scriptures), of which the Upanishads form the chief constituent. The primary philosophy captured in the Upanishads, that of one absolute reality termed as Brahman is the main principle of Vedanta. The sage Badarayana is supposed to be one of the major proponents of this philosophy and author of the Brahma Sutras based on the Upanishads. The concept of Brahman – the Supreme Spirit or the eternal, self existent, immanent and transcedent Supreme and Ultimate Reality which is the divine ground of all Being - is central to Vedanta.

By crossing these lines, one by one, you would remember you're past life. Tell me whatever you remember". On crossing the first line, he remembered that he belonged to the *Bhilla* community (Hill tribe). On crossing the second line, he attained knowledge. On crossing third line he remembered to be a fisherman. On crossing the fourth line, he said, "I belong to *Matang* community. I am standing in front of you". After crossing the fifth line, he said, "I am Somaddatta belonging to *Vaisya* community (merchantile caste)". After crossing the sixth line, he said, "I am Govind belonging to Kshatriya community (Military caste)". After crossing the seventh line he said "I am a Brahmin well versed in Vedas".

Sriguru then sprinkled spellbound sacred ashes on him. Instantly the Matanga turned into a Brahmin and his external appearance, became bright and luminous. Sriguru told him "Hold a debate with these two Brahmins on the Vedas". Then the Matanga turned Brahmin, offered his salutation to Sriguru, and taking his blessings, started reciting the Vedas. Seeing this great wonder, the two arrogant Brahmins became dumb founded. They panicked and started getting chest-pains. They prostrated at the feet of Sriguru and begged for his forgiveness for the false pride and arrogance, which they had exhibited.

Sriguru told them with compassion, "Both of you have slandered the holy Vedas and the Brahmin community. You have harassed them and committed sins. Hence you will have to endure the fruits of your sinful acts. Both of you will become *Brahma-Rakshas80*, in next birth and wander along the bank of river Ganga (Ganges). After twelve years a pious Brahmin will arrive and release you from this fate and you shall become Brahmins again".

The Matanga now felt that he has really become a Brahmin by the grace of Sriguru. He prayed "Bhagwan, I was a Brahmin in my previous life. Then why was I born in this very low class now? ". **Then Sriguru told him as to how a person born in a Superior class, gets reborn in inferior class. Sriguru also explained the various types of births a person gets depending on committing the various types of sins. Further Sriguru said, "In your previous birth you were a Brahmin. However, you had dishonoured your parents and your Guru. Through out the life you had dishonoured them. This is the reason why you took birth in this low class in this life. Now for a month after taking bath in the *Sangam74*, indulge in *Namsmaran81*, and then in your next life you will be born as a Brahmin".**

Then the Matanga said "Maharaj, by your blessings I have attained purity as well as divine knowledge. I have started reciting the 'Holy Vedas' too. Hence I pray to you to absorb me in the Brahmin community. After attaining purity by your kind grace, how can I re-absorb myself in an inferior class now? ". Then Sriguru replied, "In this life, you will continue to live in the same community, where you took birth. If I absorb you in Brahmin community, then that community will slander you. Vishwamitra performed penance for a long time but he was born in Kshatriya community. Hence sage Vasistha did not recognise Vishwamitra as a Brahmarshi[84], till Vishwamitra got his body burnt by

[84] Brahmarshi: **Brahmarshi** (from the Sanskrit words Brahma and Rishi) is the highest of the Rishis, the Hindu sages - one who has understood the meaning of Brahman. The title of **Brahmarshi** was a status defined and recognized in the sacred

sunrays and took up a new body. Hence when you are released from this body, you will get birth in a Brahmin community".

That Matanga did not agree even though Sriguru convinced him. By then his wife and children arrived at the scene. He was not even ready to touch them. Then Sriguru called a greedy tradesman and asked him to give a bath to the Matanga. No sooner the sacred ashes were washed away from the Matanga's body, the divine knowledge that he had gained due to the sprinkling of the sacred ash, also vanished and the Matanga returned to his original condition. Surprisingly he left with his wife and children. All the people present there were wonderstruck. Then Trivikram Bharati prayed and asked Sriguru "Maharaj, how is it that, this person of low cast acquired the divine knowledge and after giving a bath and washing his body, forgot that divine knowledge and became ignorant once again? ". Then Sriguru explained to everybody present there in detail, about the greatness of the sacred ash.

## Kindness Showered On a Chaste and Dutiful Wife

In Mahurpur, lived a rich Brahmin by name Gopinath. His children would not survive after birth. Therefore the husband and wife started worshipping Lord Dattatreya. After a while, a son was born to the couple. They named him Datta, with great love. As the only child, he was cherished and reared up with great affection. At the age of five, his thread-ceremony was performed with great pomp. At the age of twelve his marriage was arranged with a beautiful girl.

A few years later, Datta was infected by tuberculosis (TB). Even with the best treatment he was not cured of the disease. It only increased. His wife was very chaste and dutiful like the holy and exalted Savitri, the wife of prince Satyawan. Day and night she would render service to her husband. She would eat only so much food as her husband would eat. She would take medicines, which her husband took. Repeating the name of God, she would render service to her husband day and night. By now, the intensity of her husband's illness went on increasing. A while later he completely stopped eating. Then his wife also sacrificed eating. Because he was bed-ridden for a long time, there were blisters on his body, which started emitting foul smell. Even then his wife continued to serve him. Her faithful service to her husband even under this adverse situation appeared like performing penance.

Datta's father was a very rich man and even his father-in-law was also rich. They gave him best of the treatment from renowned *Vaidya*[85], donated money for

Vedas of Vedic religion.
A Brahmarshi is the ultimate expert of religion and spiritual knowledge. Below him are the Maharshis (Great Rishis).
The Saptarshis created out of Brahma's thoughts are perfect brahmarshis. They are greater than the Devas in power and piety. Vishwamitra was the only brahmarshi who rose to the position out of pure tapasya, a journey lasting tens of thousands of years as explained within Hindu mythology. Originally belonging to the kshatriya caste of kings and warriors, he rose by pure merit to a Brahmarshi. Bhrigu, Angira, Atri, Vishwamitra, Kashyapa, Vasishta, and Agastya are the seven brahmarshis.

[85] Vaidya: Ayurvedic physician. **Ayurveda** or **ayurvedic medicine** is a from of anchient traditional medicine in use primarily in the Indian subcontinent. The word "Ayurveda" is a tatpurusha compound of *āyus* "life" and *veda* "knowledge", and would roughly translate as the "Science of Life". Ayurveda deals with the measures of healthy living, along with therapeutic

charity, carried out charitable acts, sacrificial works, offered prayers, religious observances but Datta's health didn't improve at all. As a result, Datta became totally disappointed and lost all hopes of recovery. He spoke to his parents "Everything will take place as preordained by my fate. I wanted to give you happiness in your old age, but I myself will not be there in this world. Probably this may be the wish of God". Then he spoke to his wife "You have taken enough pains for me. Unfortunately my health condition has gone beyond one's efforts. After my departure from this world, my parents will look after you, as their daughter. In case you wish to return to your parents' home, you can do so".

The chaste and dutiful wife of Datta had not given up her hopes, so she stopped her husband during his speech and said, "Please don't sprinkle salt on my wounds. It is my misfortune that your condition has gone to this worst position. This must have been certainly written in my fate. However, I shall certainly follow you wherever you go. By the kind grace of Lord Dattatreya even now you will be saved from this calamity". Then she spoke to her father-in-law as well as mother-in-law "I have come to know that, Lord Dattatreya himself is personally present at Ganagapur in the form of Lord Narasinha Saraswati. If you permit me I shall take my husband to Ganagapur to take blessings from Lord Narasinha Saraswati".

Both her father-in law-and mother-in-law gave her the permission. After taking permission, she started for Ganagapur with her husband, laying him on a small bed. About two to four people also accompanied her in the journey. On the way, the health condition of her husband started worsening. Eventually with great difficulty she reached Ganagapur. There she enquired about Sriguru. She came to know that Sriguru was present at the 'Sangam'. Therefore, she proceeded with her people towards the Sangam, but on the way itself her husband expired. She was struck with grief and started crying loudly. All the people around her also started crying. A number of people gathered there and tried to convince her. In the meantime, an accomplished ascetic with matted hair arrived at the scene. He spoke to her "Cool down. Do not waste your energy in this futile grief. You might cry to any extent but your husband would not become alive. In this world nobody is immortal. Death accompanies along with the birth. Hence do not grieve".

Then that lady asked the Yogi "What shall I do next? Please show me the way". The accomplished Yogi explained to her the rightful duty of a virtuous wife. He further said "After the death of one's husband the concerned lady has to either burn herself on the funeral pyre of her husband or bear the pain of widowhood. You may select either of these duties as you prefer ". She replied, "Because of my young age and good looks, it would become extremely difficult for me to observe widowhood. So I would prefer to burn myself on my husbands funeral pyre". To this, the Yogi advised her, "Before burning yourself on your husbands funeral pyre (Observance of the ritual of 'Sati'), go to 'Sangam' and take the blessings of Sriguru. Take this sacred ash and apply it on your husband's body. Also take these four *Rudrakshas*[41]. From these four wear two 'Rudrakshas around your neck and use the remaining two to plug both the ears of your husband".

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measures that relate to physical, mental, social and spiritual harmony. Ayurveda is also one among the few traditional systems to medicine involving surgery.

Then she proceeded to the 'Sangam' along with the people. All the formalities for the funeral rites were completed. The lady applied the sacred ash on her husband's body; she wore two 'Rudrakshas' around her neck and used the remaining two to plug the ears of her husband. Then she went to take the blessings of Sriguru.

She saw Sriguru sitting under the *Audumbar* tree, absorbed in deep meditation. When the lady prostrated before Sriguru, Sriguru blessed her saying "*Ashtaputra soubhagyavati bhava*" (Be a mother of eight sons). To this, the people present there narrated Sriguru with all details of the situation "Maharaj this lady has willingly decided to burn herself on her husband's funeral pyre prior to which, she desired to take your blessings". **Then Sriguru replied, "My words will not go in vain. I do not agree that her husband has expired. Bring him before me". So the People left the place to carry her husbands body to Sriguru.**

At that same time some people arrived there to perform the *Padyapooja*[86] of Sriguru. In addition, the dead body of the Brahmin's son was brought and kept in front of Sriguru. Sriguru then told the people who had come there to perform 'Padyapooja', "Now sprinkle the water from this Padyapooja on the 'dead body". After this, Sriguru glanced at the dead body with his kind Divine Grace and a miracle took place. The dead Datta got up and sat!. He looked around and was surprised to see the people assembled there. His wife was thrilled to see her husband alive and narrated everything to him.

Then people present accompanying her took bath at the 'Sangam' and worshipped Sriguru in a *Shodshopchar66* way. After this worship Sriguru spoke to the lady "Along with the Naamsmaran (repeating God's name mentally), since you were also rendering service to your husband, I was forced to come to your rescue. Your husband will continue to live for thirty more years and you will also continue to live as a *Suvasinee*[87]. You will go to Heaven, only as a Suvasinee, before your husband's departure from this world. As per my word, you will become a mother of eight sons and your entire family will be fully devoted to Lord Dattatreya and continue to live with happiness and peace".

The second day too, they all worshipped Sriguru with great devotion. They held a function to entertain all Brahmins and also gave money in charity in a big way. When the lady asked Sriguru about the greatness of 'Rudraksha' and the *Bhasma*[88], Sriguru told her in detail about the greatness of both. Then people present there, returned home in a merry mood, singing in praise of Sriguru.

## Defect in the Food Offered By Another Person

When Sriguru was in Ganagapur, a pious Brahmin too lived there. He never lied and he would never accept any charity. He never went to anyone's house to eat food.

[86] Padyapooja: Padyapooja is a ceremony of honouring a person worthy of reverence, by cleaning the holy-feet of that person and then worshipping him
[87] Suvasinee: A woman with the husband still alive.
[88] Bhasma: Sacred ash

He would maintain himself and his wife on whatever dry food grains he would collect as alms. However, his wife was very unhappy. In Ganagapur various visitors would come everyday to arrange for sumptuous meals and offer it to the Brahmins as part of their religious ceremony. Thus Brahmins were entertained almost daily. These people would invite Brahmin couple's for meals. They would please Brahmin-couples with sweet and sumptuous meals in addition to offering them charitable donation. This way the Brahmin community of Ganagapur enjoyed sweet sumptuous meals and money in charity. This particular pious Brahmin was very resolute about his religious vow of not accepting any food offered by anyone else. However, his wife was extremely desirous of enjoying the sweet sumptuous food. Due to this, she was very disappointed with her husband. This disappointment led her to constantly accuse and bother her husband.

One day a rich gentleman came to Ganagapur to perform *Shraddha*[89] ceremony. He invited all the Brahmin-couples of Ganagapur. Hence the Brahmin lady suggested her husband to attend the ceremony together and enjoy the sumptuous meals. Her husband did not agree. The lady thought that other Brahmin ladies were extremely fortunate to attend the ceremony and enjoy the meals and monetary gifts, and just because of her husband, she has to deprive herself of this opportunity. Therefore, she approached Sriguru with these complaints about her husband. So Sriguru called the Brahmin and asked him to attend the Shraddha ceremony and enjoy sumptuous meals along with his wife. As per the order of Sriguru the Brahmin went to attend the Shraddha ceremony.

At the ceremony the rich gentleman made a solemn promise regarding his ancestors. The Brahmin lady became very happy by the mere thought that she would get sweet sumptuous meal. Just when she was about to take a morsel of food to eat, she saw that dogs and pigs had already started eating directly from the leafed-plates meant for guests. Seeing this she felt disgusted, left the meals and went away from the ceremony. Then she spoke to her husband "How did you take food there? Those dirty animals were eating food directly from the plates meant for guests". The Brahmin replied, "Because of you this grievous wrong has taken place today. I will take the necessary permission from Sriguru and atone for this wrong act".

Both went to see Sriguru and narrated the story. Sriguru said, "don't worry. You had been to the Shraddha ceremony on my orders". He explained to both, the rules of conduct, manners and principles of Brahmin community in detail. He further added, "A Brahmin who observes all the rules of conduct and principles need not worry about anything in his life. There will be prosperity with the kind grace of Goddess Laxmi in his house and he will enjoy long life. Therefore, you should observe all the rules of conduct and principles of Brahmin community with full faith".

The Brahmin couple took Sriguru's blessings and returned home. This incident at the Shraddha ceremony completely destroyed the Brahmin lady's strong desire for accepting the food offered by others. Thus both became very happy with the blessings of Sriguru.

[89] Shraddha: Ceremony performed periodically in the honour of a dead relative and offer food, water etc to Brahmin in the honour of manes

## Saved the Honour of Bhaskar

When Sriguru was at Ganagapur, large group of devotees thronged to get his blessings. Someone or the other would arrange sumptuous food to the devotees. No day passed without the sumptuous food being provided to the devotees. A poor Brahmin named Bhaskar lived in a village near Ganagapur. Due to poverty they would maintain themselves just on dry bread.

Bhaskar was a great devotee of Sriguru. He had a great desire to feed Sriguru. Therefore, he started saving food grains and money, a bit at a time, on a day-today basis. Finally he came to Ganagapur. However, in Ganagapur's huge crowd he would remain silent with his little bundle of food grains and money. Everyday a Brahmin would hold the ceremony of serving sumptuous food to the devotees. This way, three months passed. Other Brahmins started commenting on poor Bhaskar "This person is continuing here to enjoy whatever available free. Whatever he has brought in that small package is hardly enough to feed at the most three Brahmins, but this Brahmin is planning to feed all the Brahmins with this little package of food grains".

Sriguru understood the heart-desire of his devotee Bhaskar. One day Sriguru called on Bhaskar and said "Today, you arrange for the ceremony of serving food to the Brahmins". Bhaskar was extremely happy since Sriguru himself gave the order. With the little money available with him, Bhaskar went to the market and bought vegetables and groceries. Sriguru himself sent the invitation to all the Brahmins for the ceremony. He also ordered for four thousand leaf-plates to serve food in. Seeing this large-scale preparation all the Brahmins started making fun of Bhaskar. However, the fully devoted Bhaskar was busy in preparing cooked food for the ceremony. Bhaskar worshipped Sriguru once the cooked food was ready. Then Sriguru asked Bhaskar to bring the vessels containing cooked food in his presence. Sriguru then gave his clothes, worn on his body, to Bhaskar and asked him to cover the vessels with it.

In reality the food cooked for the ceremony was hardly enough to feed two or three Brahmins. Nevertheless due to the kind grace of Sriguru, even after serving food to four thousand Brahmins the vessels containing the food were still full. Subsequently all the villagers and their children were also invited to take the food. In spite of serving these people, the food still remained in the vessels as before. Finally the remaining food was dispersed in the water to feed aquatic life.

Sriguru was so pleased by Bhaskar's devotion that he blessed Bhaskar as "Not only would your poverty vanish but also you will enjoy your children and grand children's company in your own house". Sriguru's fame spread in all directions due to this incident and countless people from all corners started pouring in to get his blessings.

## Old Couple Blessed With Children

Sriguru Narasinha Saraswati was at Ganagapur. There a virtuous Brahmin couple Somanath and Gangabai also lived. Both became old but they had no children. Gangabai had crossed the age of sixty years. She was very religious and as daily observance, she would go to the *Muth*[90] for the blessings of Sriguru. There she would light an oil lamp and wave it around Sriguru. Many days passed and one day she came under the merciful view of Sriguru. He asked Ganga "As an observance you come here regularly and wave the lighted wick lamp around me. What do you want from me? ". Then Ganga spoke very humbly "Maharaj, I am a childless woman. A childless lady has no prestige in the society. Everybody considers her a sign of ill omen. I have already crossed the age of sixty years. Now in this life, where is the chance of giving birth to a child? Hence please give me blessings that at least in my next life I will become a woman and give birth to a son".

Sriguru smilingly said, "Who has seen next life? In this life itself, you will give birth to a daughter and later on to a son". By this blessing Gangabai's happiness knew no bounds. Nevertheless, she had a doubt as to how would she conceive and give birth, since her menses had already stopped? But after Sriguru's blessing, she said "I had been worshiping the Holy *Peepal*[91] tree regularly. But there was no benefit from that worship. Hence I started worshipping you regularly after giving up the worship of the Holy Peepal tree. But how would I get the offspring's in this life? ". **Sriguru said, "Do not slander the Holy Peepal tree. The worship and the circumambulation of the Holy Peepal tree will not go waste. You can find the existence of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu, and Lord Maheshwar in the root, the trunk and the top of the Holy Peepal tree respectively. In addition, on the branches of the Holy Peepal tree, all the Hindu Gods are present. There is one Holy Peepal tree at the confluence of the rivers Bhima and Amarja. Go there and worship the Holy Peepal tree daily".**

With full faith in Sriguru's words Gangabai stayed at the 'Sangam' and started worshipping the Holy Peepal tree. On the third day, a Brahmin came in her dream and said, "Your wish will be fulfilled. Go to Ganagapur and take the blessings of Sriguru Narasinha Saraswati, the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. Then complete the circumambulation of Sriguru and offer your obeisance to him. Whatever *prasad*[92] he gives, take that as blessings".

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[90] Muth: Temple-Shrine. Muth and Temple – Shrine have been used interchangeably in this book.
[91] Peepal Tree: The Holy Fig Tree. Tree belongs to the Sacred Figs (Ficus religiosa).
[92] Prasad: **Prasad** is both a mental condition of generosity, as well as a material substance that is first offered to a deity and then consumed with the faith that the deity's blessing resides within it. In contemporary Hindu religious practice in India, the desire to get prasad and have darshan are the two major motivations of pilgrimage & temple visits. In its material sense, prasada is created by a process of giving and receiving between a human devotee and the divine god. For example, a devotee makes an offering of a material substance such as flowers, fruits, or sweets -- which is called 'naivedya'. The deity then 'enjoys' or tastes a bit of the offering. This now-divinely invested substance is called 'prasad", and is received by the devotee to be ingested, worn, etc. It may be the same material that was originally offered, or material offered by others and then re-distributed to other devotees. As a 'leftover substance', prasada is special because it is understood as being invested with divine grace or blessing.

Gangabai woke up from the dream. As per the orders of the Brahmin in the dream, she took bath in the 'Sangam', worshipped the Holy Peepal tree, and then went to Ganagapur. There she completed the circumambulation of Sriguru and offered her obeisance to him. Then Sriguru gave her a fruit and asked her to eat it. Then Gangabai returned home and narrated everything to her husband. Then she concluded her religious vow. A bit later she gave charity to the Brahmins and with great devotion ate the fruit given by Sriguru. After eating the fruit, a miracle took place. That old lady became young and regained her period of menses. In due course Ganga became pregnant. People were amazed to see this miracle. At proper time Ganga gave birth to a daughter. The couple Somanath and Ganga were overjoyed seeing their newborn. They took their child to Sriguru and placed her at the lotus feet of Sriguru for blessings. Sriguru said, "Name this child as Saraswati. Your daughter will live up to one hundred years and continue to live happily with her children and grandchildren. Her husband will be a highly learned man with great knowledge. Further, you will give birth to a son. Tell me now, what type of son do you desire? Do you wish to have a wise son with a life span of thirty years and who will become a father of five children in future, or a foolish son with life span of one hundred years? ". Then Gangabai told Sriguru "Bless me with a son with a life span of thirty years". Then Sriguru said, "Be it so!" Later Gangabai gave birth to a son, which brought full happiness in her home.

## Tree Stump Blossoms

There was a Brahmin by name Narahari, belonging to Bhargav caste of Apastamb branch. He was suffering from leprosy disease. Even though he had a prosperous home and family, he was forced to leave his house due to leprosy. In spite of long treatment there was no cure. He would go from village to village begging for his survival. On hearing the Divine fame of Sriguru Narasinha Saraswati, he came to Ganagapur, with great hope.

At Ganagapur he went to the Temple shrine to get Sriguru's Darshan. However, there was a big crowd of devotees and they were snubbing him with great contempt since he was a leper. He even started entreating them by laying himself down on the ground. However, nobody paid any attention to him. Lord Sriguru, who is very kind to the devotees, heard his cry for help. Sriguru then told his disciples, "A leper is standing outside. Go and bring him here". Narahari felt greatly blessed by Sriguru's darshan. He cried and narrated his tale of woe before the Divine presence of Sriguru. At that very instant, a farmer was walking along the street outside, carrying a dry Audumbar tree stump of. Sriguru saw the farmer and told Narhari **"Take that dry stump from the farmer and go to the *Sangam74*. There, near the 'Sangameshwar' temple, make a pit in the ground and sow this tree stump. After taking bath daily at the 'Sangam', water this tree stump. Repeat this three times everyday. The day this tree stump blossoms, that day you will be cured of leprosy".**

**With full faith Sriguru's words, the leper went to the 'Sangam'. With great faith he sowed the dry Audumber tree stump and started watering it three times a day after taking bath in the 'Sangam'. Seeing this, people around started making fun of Narahari. However, ignoring the insulting remarks made by the people he was following the orders of Sriguru with full devotion. One**

**day, his devotion bore the fruit. Sriguru had come to the 'Sangam' with his disciples. Sriguru sprinkled water from his *Kamandalu* on that dry stump and on Narahari's body. There was a miracle. The dry stump of Audumbar tree started blossoming and instantly, not only was Narhari cured of his leprosy but he also received a bright and lustrous body**. People present there were stunned by this great miracle. Singing devotional songs the people present there worshiped Sriguru by waving a lamp before him. Later on sweet sumptuous food was served to everyone to mark the joyous mood. Then Sriguru told Narahari "stay here at Ganagapur along with your wife and children". Narahari brought his family to Ganagapur and lived there with great happiness rendering devotional service to Sriguru.

## Devotee Sayamdeo

Sriguru had given his Darshan to Sayamdeo at Vasarbrahmeshwar. From that moment itself Sayamdeo became a great devotee of Sriguru. During that time a Muslim King had called him to the royal court to slay him but due of the kind grace of Sriguru, he started writhing in pain and instead, was forced to bid farewell to Sayamdeo with full honours. At that time, Sayamdeo had thought of dedicating his entire life in rendering service to Sriguru, but Sriguru did not agree to his proposal, and instead promised to give him Darshan after fifteen years. From that day on, Sayamdeo had become a true devotee of Sriguru. He would worship Sriguru everyday and would anxiously wait for the 15-year wait to end.

During those days he would collect news, listen to the Divine plays of Sriguru and become anxious for his 'Darshan'. Around the end of the 15-year waiting period, he left his home and went to Ganagapur for Sriguru's Darshan. No sooner he got Sriguru's 'Darshan', he prostrated at the lotus feet of Sriguru. Seeing his devotion of the highest order, Sriguru was fully pleased. He said, "You are my true devotee. In your family this tradition of rendering devotional service to Lord Dattatreya will continue throughout. Now immediately go to the 'Sangam', take bath and return here for taking afternoon meals".

Accordingly, Sayamdeo went to the 'Sangam', took bath, and returned. Then, Sriguru asked him to get seated next to him and enquired about his well-being. Sayamdeo replied, "I am staying in Uttarkanchi. By your grace, I am very happy and there is no scarcity of anything. My brother and sons look after the family business. Now I am free from household duties and hence I wish to utilise rest of my life by rendering service at your lotus feet". To this Sriguru replied, "To render your service to me is a difficult task. I don't reside at one fixed place. Under such situation, can you render service to me? If you desire to do so I have no objection". Sayamdeo repeated his firm decision and from that moment itself, started rendering service to Sriguru. He would render service to Sriguru starting early in the morning till Sriguru slept at night.

This way, three months passed. Sriguru decided to test Sayamdeo. He took Sayamdeo to the confluence of Bhima and Amarja rivers and explained to him the secrets of the path of devotion to God. By then there was nightfall. All of a sudden wind

started blowing with great speed. A cloud of dust started rising up in the sky. Trees started getting uprooted and falling. Lightening started flashing. Very soon, the sky became cloudy and torrential rainfall started. To protect Sriguru from this torrential rain, Sayamdeo stood there near Sriguru in the shape of an umbrella. Due to the heavy rains and wind gusts Sayamdeo started suffering from extreme cold. Then Sriguru said "Go and bring wood and fire from the Muth90 to light fire. In this severe cold let us warm ourselves. Keep in mind that you walk in a line. Do not look sideways or turn back".

Taking the orders of Sriguru, Sayamdeo started walking with great pleasure. It was completely dark everywhere. He was not able to see anything in the darkness. It was also raining heavily. In between there would be lightening. It was only in this flash of the lightening that he was able to proceed. This way by intermittently running and stumbling all the way he finally reached the 'Muth'. From the 'Muth' he collected some fuel wood, dry cow-dung cakes, and fire and started his return journey. By that time, the rain had stopped. On the way, he saw the same uprooted trees. Suddenly, he remembered Sriguru's command to not turn around and look. Unfortunately at the same instant, he also got a strong desire to turn around and have a quick look and so he did. When he looked back, he saw a large cobra following him. Fear gripped him and he took a long jump and looked back again. Once again he saw a similar type of large cobra following him. He started running and went astray in the forest. Then he started praying to Sriguru. Suddenly he saw that there was no trace of any heavy rainfall. There was no trace of either any uprooted trees or any dirt. He saw Sriguru sitting comfortably under that Peepal tree at the confluence of Bhima-Amarja Rivers.

Finally Sayamdeo ran towards the tree and laid himself down at the lotus feet of Sriguru and paid his obeisance. Sriguru said, "Why did you look back, disobeying my command? It was only for your protection that I had sent those two cobras behind you". By that time, those two cobras came near the lotus feet of Sriguru, offered their obeisance with bent hoods, and returned. **Then Sriguru spoke to him "True devotion to one's Guru is an extremely difficult task. One who serves his Guru with full devotion need not be afraid of anything". Then Sriguru narrated a mythological story regarding the extent to which a Guru would test his disciple and once fully satisfied then the extent to which a Guru bestows his grace for the welfare of that disciple.**

Sriguru then spoke to Sayamdeo "You are my faithful and true devotee. You are blessed. Go home and bring your family for my blessings". Taking the orders, Sayamdeo returned to his native place Uttarkanchi and brought his family to Ganagapur. Sriguru placed his bountiful hand on the head of Nagnath, the eldest son, blessed him fully, and said, "He will become a great devotee of mine. Your family will become prosperous with Goddess of Wealth would dwell in your house. Stay here with your wife and render your devotional service".

Seeing the Sayamdeo's devotion, Sriguru narrated to him about *Anant Vrat* [93] and asked him to observe the same. Sayamdeo worshipped the Infinite. Sayamdeo fed

[93] Anant Vrat: Infinite Religious Observance

the Brahmins and the devotees with sumptuous meals and then ordered his son Nagnath to observe *Anant Vrat*. Sayamdeo remained at Ganagapur with his wife to render devotional service and his family returned to Uttarkanchi.

## Weaver Gets Darshan of Mallikarjun

When Sriguru was at Ganagapur a Weaver had become a great devotee of Him. He would be so much engrossed in the devotion of Sriguru that after earning the required money for his family's maintenance, he would spend the balance of the time in the 'Muth'. He would clean and sweep the entire 'Muth' with great devotion and return home only after taking Sriguru's Darshan.

A number of days passed by this way and the festival of *Mahashivaratri*[94] approached soon. Majority of the village people started getting ready to go to the 'Sri Shail Mountain' to attend the religious fair. Everyone who belonged to the weaver's community also planned to attend the fair. However, this weaver had taken for granted that Sriguru himself is his *Mallikarjun*[95] and the 'Muth' his Sri Shail Mountain. Hence he was not ready to part away from the lotus feet of Sriguru. His relatives and friends firmly persuaded him to accompany them to Sri Shail Mountain, but he did not agree. They all left for the Mountain. When he went to the 'Muth' Sriguru asked him "Everybody went to the fair, but why did you not go? ". He replied "Oh, Lord, for me you are my Mallikarjun!".

Finally day of Mahashivaratri dawned. Right in the morning after taking care of all the chores in the 'Muth', the weaver went to the 'Sangam'. After bathing at 'Sangam' he started taking Sriguru's 'Darshan'. Sriguru was highly pleased with the undivided devotion displayed by the weaver. Sriguru spoke to the weaver "Come, today I will arrange for the 'Darshan' of Sri Shail Mallikarjuna for you. Sit near me and firmly hold the Padukas76 with closed eyes". The weaver strictly followed the orders of Sriguru. In the twinkling of an eye, Sriguru along with the weaver reached 'PatalGanga' on Sri Shail Mountain!

On Sriguru's order the weaver opened his eyes. To his great surprise, the weaver saw the majestic Sri Shail Mountain surrounded by natural beauty. The grand temple of Lord Mallikarjun standing on the mountain, the flowing water of PatalGanga River and the great crowd of people assembled there for the fair. Sriguru spoke to him "Go quickly, bathe in the river and then take the 'Darshan' of Lord Mallikarjuna and return back".

When he went to take bath in the river, he met his village neighbours, brother, sister as well as mother and father at the river. They all asked him "you were not going to come here, then how did you reach here? With whom did you come? When did you come? ". The weaver replied, "I myself do not know. A few moments back I was near the 'Sangam' at Ganagapur. Sriguru brought me here". Nevertheless, people did not

[94] Mahashivratri: Mahashivaratri is a great religious festival dedicated to Lord Shiva, held on the 14$^{th}$ day of the second half of the month of Magh as per Hindu calendar and February month as per English Calendar.
[95] Mallikarjun: Another name of Lord Shiva.

believe his words and he also thought it is not necessary to convince them. **He finished his bath, took the worship materials and when he entered the temple, he was astounded to see Sriguru himself glaring with splendour in the place of the *Jyotirlinga*[96]of Lord Mallikarjun.**

He returned to Sriguru after completing his worship. He told Sriguru "In the temple, I did not get 'Darshan' of Lord Mallikarjun. In place of Lord Mallikarjun I saw you personally glaring with splendour. You are Lord Mallikarjun Himself. In that case, why do people undergo all the trouble to come here from far off places and traverse long distances on pilgrimages? ". Then Sriguru explained to him about the greatness of the place. Sriguru replied, "From now on consider *Kalleshwar*[97] of Ganagapur as Lord Mallikarjun and start worshipping".

Then Sriguru returned to Ganagapur with the weaver. Later, the weaver returned to the 'Muth' from the 'Sangam' and gave Sriguru's message to the Brahmins of the 'Muth'. Observing the shaved head of the weaver the Brahmins asked him about it. The weaver replied, "I had been to Sri Shail fair. There I got my head shaved, took bath and took Darshan of Lord Mallikarjun, paid my obeisance and returned. The Brahmins asked, "Why are you gossiping? ". Then the weaver told the Brahmins "Sriguru himself took me to Sri Shail fair and brought me back". The Brahmins of the 'Muth' were highly surprised.

After a few days, the people of the village who had gone to Sri Shail fair, returned home. From then, it was confirmed that the weaver was present in the fair. Knowing this reality of the situation all the people of Ganagapur were highly amazed and felt extremely happy to see the unfathomable miraculous play of Sriguru as well as the good fortune of the weaver. Rendering his devotional service to Lord Kalleshwar at Ganagapur the weaver came to be known as an exceptional devotee.

## Leper Becomes a Poet

There was a Brahmin named Nandi. His body was affected by white Leprosy. He went to Tulajapur to offer his prayers to *Bhavani Mata*[98]. For nearly three years he offered his prayers and worshiped Bhavani Mata along with chanting continuously Gods name. Then one day, Bhavani Mata gave 'Darshan' in his dream and ordered him "Go to *Goddess Chandala Parmeshwari*[99]. There your work will be done".

[96] Jyotirlinga: Jyotirlinga is one of twelve famous Lingas of the Hindu God Shiva; Lingam is the emblamatic representation of Lord Shiva. The **Lingam** (also, **Linga**; Sanskrit meaning "mark" or "sign") is used as a symbol for the worship of god Shiva. The use of this symbol as an object of worship is a timeless tradition in India.
Lingam is usually found with Yoni, the pedestal. As such, Lingam represented the male entity of the universe, while Yoni represented the female; it was natural togetherness of the male (Shiva) and female (Shakti) (Lingam and Yoni) as the point of energy, point of creation, and point of enlightenment.
[97] Kalleshwar: Another name of Lord Shiva.
[98] Bhavani Mata: Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort.
[99] Goddess Chandala Parmeshwari: Temple of Goddess near Gulbarga in Karnatak State

Thus following Bhavani Mata's command Nandi went to the temple of Goddess Chandala Parameshwari and started worshipping. Nearly seven months passed. One day, Goddess Chandala gave him 'Darshan' in his dream and said "Go to Ganagapur and worship Sri Narasinha Saraswati, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey. By his blessings, you will be cured of white leprosy on the body". Nandi woke up from the dream. He felt very sad. He thought, "If I were to be directed to a human being, then why was I detained here for seven-eight months? ". Therefore, he remained in the temple of the Goddess Chandala itself instead of going to Ganagapur. Finally Goddess Chandala ordered him "Leave this place immediately and go away".

Nandi became helpless and went to Ganagapur. Seeing Nandi, Sriguru spoke "Oh! Why did you leave the Goddess and come here to a human being? ". Nandi felt ashamed and begged for forgiveness and took shelter under Sriguru. Sriguru softened and felt pity towards Nandi. He then called devotee Somanath and said "Somanath, take Nandi to the 'Shatkul Teerth' of Sangam. Let him take bath in that Teerth with mental resolve. Afterwards let him worship the Holy Peepal tree on the bank of 'Sangam' and let him abandon his old clothes and wear new ones". Obeying the kind advice of Sriguru, Nandi Brahmin took bath in the Shatkul Teerth. No sooner he did so, the white leprosy spots on his body vanished!

Further, no sooner he worshipped the Holy Peepal tree his body became lustrous. Finally when he abandoned his old clothes, all the filthiness of his body got cleansed. People were amazed. However, a little white spot remained on his thigh. When he returned back to the 'Muth', Sriguru told him, "Since you had a small doubt in your mind this white spot remained. If you start singing praises in my favour, this white spot will also vanish". Nandi said, "I am illiterate. I do not know how to read and write. In that case, how can I praise you? ". Then Sriguru sprinkled the sacred ash on Nandi's tongue. No sooner this was done; Nandi started singing praises filled with devotion. When he continued the last remaining white spot on his thigh too disappeared. Nandi became a great poet. He stayed at Ganagapur till the end of his life and continued rendering his devotional service to Sriguru.

## Poet Narhari

In a village called Hippargi there lived a devotee of Sriguru. With the help of villagers he built a temple of Lord Dattatrey. For the *Prana-Pratishthan*[100] of the idol, he prayed and earnestly requested Sriguru to come there. Sriguru accepted his request. The villagers became very happy, when they came to know that Sriguru would be arriving shortly. They started decorating the village with great pomp to extend a grand welcome to Sriguru.

In the same village there was a Brahmin by name Narahari. He was a great devotee of Lord Kalleshwar. Everyday in the temple of Lord Kalleshwar, he would compose five verses in the praise of Lord Shiva and offer the same to the Lord. The villagers thought that if Narahari composes devotional songs in praise of Sriguru and

[100] Prana Pratisthan: Prana pratistha is a rite or ceremony (Samskara in Sanskrit) by which the spirit or being of a deity is infused or brought to inhabit a murti or cult image of that deity. Once Prana Pratisthan is performed, the Idol is considered to be divinely charged and a representation of the Divine supreme spirit.

render service to the Lord it would add beauty to the ceremony. Therefore they requested Narahari, but he did not agree. He said, "I have dedicated my talent and voice only in the service of Lord Kalleshwar. I will not utilise my talent and voice in praising a mere human being". Hearing this the villagers became very angry.

Finally the day planned for the ceremony dawned. Men and women of the village started celebrating with great pomp. Beautiful designs were drawn on the floors with coloured powder. The entire place was decorated with festoons of flowers and green leaves. Banners were seen fluttering in the breeze filled with melodious music emitted by the different musical instruments. Singing devotional songs and dancing along, the villagers brought Sriguru in a grand procession to the village.

That day as usual, poet Narahari came to the Kalleshwar temple to worship Lord Shiva. He performed his worship with devotion and then sat for meditation. In the meantime he had a nap. Then he had a dream in his nap. In the dream he saw Sriguru himself is seated in the place Lord Shiva's idol in the Kalleshwar temple. Sriguru spoke to him "I am an incarnation in a human form. Why do you worship and praise me? ". Hearing this Narahari woke up from the dream. It dawned to him that Sriguru is Lord Kalleshwar himself. He immediately ran to the house where Sriguru had camped. He stood before the door and started singing devotional song-verses composed by him in praise of Lord Kalleshwar. People present there, were highly amazed to see this poet Narahari, who had point blank refused to sing his praise-verses in the presence of Sriguru, now has started singing the same verses with full devotion in the honour of Sriguru.

Singing the praises he went near Sriguru. Sriguru asked him "You were criticizing me. How is it that all of a sudden you started getting devoted to me? ". Narahari prostrated at the lotus feet of Sriguru and prayed "Oh! Lord, I was completely obsessed by ignorance. Please forgive me. Till today, I rendered my devotional service to Lord Kalleshwar. As a result of that devotional service I got your 'Darshan' today. Kindly accept me as a disciple and bless me. Henceforth I will render my devotional service at your lotus feet till the end of my life". Then he started singing in the praise of Sriguru. Sriguru was pleased. He accepted Narahari as his disciple and said, "I myself exist in the idol of Lord Kalleshwar. Do not make any distinction". Sriguru took Narahari along with him to Ganagapur. Narahari stayed at Ganagapur rendering devotional service to Sriguru. He composed a number of verses in the devotional praise of Sriguru. People started regarding his as an accomplished poet.

## Acceptance of Service in Eight Different forms

Sriguru's fame spread in all directions. Devotees from all villages started coming to take Sriguru's 'Darshan'. By then *Diwali*[101] festival came around the corner. One day, seven devotees belonging to seven different villages came to Ganagapur and with

[101] Diwali: Diwali festival - the festival of nocturnal illuminations held during the last two days of Ashwin and first two days of Kartik, as per Hindu calendar and the month of November as per English calendar. The festival marks the victory of good over evil. The Sanskrit word Deepavali means array of lights that stands for victory of brightness over darkness.

devotion requested Sriguru to visit their homes on Diwali day for refreshment. They started quarrelling among themselves with individual confidence, that each one was sure of taking Sriguru to only his house, for Diwali festival. Then Sriguru told them, "I am alone, and you are seven individuals. How can I go to seven different houses at the same time? You decide one house and I will certainly come there". However, each one was insisting separately for his gracious presence. So they started quarrelling between themselves.

Finally Sriguru asked them to sit a bit further away from him. Aware of their devotional feelings, Sriguru did not want to displease any one of them. Therefore, he called each person separately near him and said, "I will come to only your house. Now go home and start preparations. But do not inform anyone else about this". The seven devotees became very happy and went home. However, the disciples of the Muth were displeased to know that on Diwali day Sriguru will leave them all and go to another village. They all prayed and insisted Sriguru to grace the Diwali day by his presence in the Muth. Sriguru told them "Okay, On Diwali day, I will remain here in the Muth along with you all".

On Diwali day, Sriguru took eight different forms, remained present in eight different places concurrently, and celebrated Diwali day. Everybody felt separately happy with the assumption that Sriguru graced the Diwali day with them due to their individual insistence. After a few days, on the *Kartik Poornima*[102] Day all the disciples came to the Ganagapur Muth. All those seven devotees started saying "On Diwali day, Sriguru was present in our house only. He did not go to any other place". Then Sriguru spoke "Whatever all these devotees say, is true. I was personally present at all these places simultaneously. For the happiness of all these devotees I had to take eight forms". Noting this divine miraculous play of Sriguru, the devotion of the devotees towards Sriguru started increasing.

## A Farmer Devotee Favoured

Sriguru would daily travel from Ganagapur to the confluence of Bhima- Amarja rivers for bath. While he was going back and forth from the Sangam, a farmer whose field was on the way would always offer his prostrations at the lotus feet of Sriguru. Since the farmer would offer his salutation twice to Sriguru daily on his way to the Sangam and back, his devotional feelings towards Sriguru started taking deeper roots. Several months passed by like this. The farmer fully realized that his life-conditions have started improving from all respects due to his strong devotion towards Sriguru.

One day, while Sriguru was going to the Sangam, the farmer saluted him as usual. Sriguru asked, "What do you want? ". Farmer said "I have sowed millet seeds in my field. I pray to you to kindly step in my field and bless it with the touch of your lotus feet". Sriguru stepped in that field. The crop was very good and likely to be ready for harvesting within a few days. Sriguru said, "I am going to the Sangam to take a bath. By the time I return, harvest this crop completely". Since the farmer had total devotion towards Sriguru he started harvesting the crop. No sooner he started cutting the crop,

[102] Kartik Poornima: Full Moon day in the month of Kartik as per Hindu calendar and November or December month of English Calendar.

his wife and children began to cry. Even the people of that village started advising him against doing it, but there was no use.

By the time Sriguru returned from the Sangam the farmer had cut the crop completely and cleaned the field. When Sriguru returned and saw the field, he said "Oh! I had told you jokingly and you have really cut down the entire crop". So saying Sriguru went away. Within a few days after this incident there was torrential rain in the village. The ripe crop in all the other fields of the village got completely ruined and to the surprise of the villager's, in the field belonging to this farmer, it started sprouting all over. This time, by the blessings of Sriguru the farmer harvested ten times more crop than usual. He became extremely happy. He donated enough corn to the Brahmins and brought home the remaining plenty of corn. Everybody in that village honoured the faith and devotedness of the farmer.

## Sister Ratna Liberated

Ratna, Sriguru's sister, came to Ganagapur to take his blessings. Sriguru had promised her earlier that he would meet her after fifteen years. At that time Sriguru foretold her that in her previous life, she was in the habit of kicking a cow and speaking ill of others, due to which she would suffer from white leprosy in this life.

As foretold, she did suffer from white leprosy and her whole body got affected. Therefore, she became very nervous and as foretold, came to Ganagapur to take the blessings of Sriguru. Sriguru told his sister to take bath for three days in the holy water, which will destroy all her sins. So when she took bath in the holy water for three days, all the white spots on her body disappeared and true devotion awakened in her.

## Washerman Reborn

Sriguru, in his previous incarnation as Sripad Srivallabh had granted a boon to a washer-man that "In your next life, you will become a Muslim *Badshah*[103] and enjoy all the royal happiness and at that time, I shall come and give "Darshan" to you and remind you about your previous life".

As a result of this boon, the washer-man took birth in the Muslim family of Vaidur Nagar[104]. In due course, he became the Badshah of Bidar104. He was very tolerant towards Hindus. He never harmed any temples, holy places and Muths belonging to the Hindu community, on the contrary he always helped them by giving donations. He honoured Hindu saints and ascetics. Because of this nature of the Badshah, the *Moulvis*[105] would become very jealous and start instigating the Badshah to oppress the Hindus. However, the Badshah never agreed for the same.

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[103] Badshah: Emperor or King
[104] Vaidur Nagar: New name: 'Bidar', now in Karnatak State
[105] Moulvis: Muslim Priests

One day, suddenly an abscess formed on the Badshah's thigh and it started giving shooting pain. *Hakims*[106] and *Vaidya*[107] called from far away places tried to treat the condition, but there were no results. Even the method of *Tantra-Mantra*[108] was utilised for the treatment but there was no use. Tying talisman to treat it bore no fruits as well. When all these methods failed, Badshah invited all the Brahmins and then they said, "This is the result of the sins committed in your past life. Only an ascetic can solve your problem". When Badshah enquired about the ascetic, the Brahmins said "There is only one ascetic of the highest order and he is Narasinha Saraswati , staying at Ganagapur at present".

The Badshah immediately started for Ganagapur to have a 'Darshan 'of Sriguru. He was accompanied by elephants, horses, and the army. When he reached Ganagapur, he came to know that Sriguru is at the Sangam (*confluence of Bhima and Amarja rivers*). Immediately he went to the Sangam. He saw Sriguru sitting under a *Peepal* tree on the riverbank. No sooner the King saw Sriguru; he jumped down from his palanquin and started running bare foot towards Sriguru. On reaching Sriguru's abode, he prostrated at his lotus feet. Seeing the Badshah, Sriguru said "Oh! Washer-man, where were you? You have become a Badshah and today I see you at this place? ". No sooner he heard the words of Sriguru; the Badshah remembered his past life, which made him very happy. Then the Badshah said, "Maharaj, by your kind grace, I have enjoyed all the royal happiness. I have seen enough of it, no more needed! Now I am tired of this life and hence I wish to remain here and render devotional service at your lotus feet. Because of this abscess on my thigh, I had the opportunity to get your 'Darshan' and blessings".

Sriguru asked, "Where is your abscess? Show me". Badshah showed that thigh. However, there was neither any abscess nor the pain. The King became extremely happy and then started praying to Sriguru "Oh! Kind *Gururaj*[109], by your kind grace, I have enjoyed all the royal pleasures, majesty, and grandeur. There was no lack of happiness. At least once kindly grace me with your presence in my palace and see the royal pleasures, majesty and grandeur favoured to me by you. I also again pray for your kind blessings".

Then Sriguru said, "Cows are being slaughtered in your kingdom. Only if you stop this, will I come to your palace". The Badshah immediately gave an order to stop Cow slaughtering. The soldiers hurried back to the kingdom to make necessary arrangement to welcome Sriguru. When Sriguru started his journey to the kingdom in a palanquin, the Badshah started going on foot, but Sriguru ordered him to ride a horse.

The town was decorated beautifully to welcome Sriguru. The Hindu community were very happy by the very thought of being able to get Sriguru's 'Darshan' and the Muslim community were very eager to find out about this Hindu ascetic in whose service their King has gone crazy. Sriguru was welcomed in the town with great pomp. Badshah welcomed Sriguru in his palace with great honour. He was personally fanning

[106] Hakim: Arabic physician
[107] Vaidya: Ayurvedic physician
[108] Tantra-Mantra: Enchantment and Sacred Hymns
[109] Gururaj: An ascetic of the highest order

Sriguru. He offered his humble prayers to Sriguru. As per his prayer, Sriguru accepted some fruits. Then Sriguru got Badshah seated near him and said, "As desired by you, I have seen your majesty and grandeur. Are you not happy enjoying all these royal pleasures? ".

With folded hands the Badshah replied, "By your kind grace I have enjoyed all the royal pleasures. Now I want to render my devotional services at your lotus feet". Then Sriguru said "If you really desire so, then appoint your heir apparent to your throne and then come to *Kadalivan*[110] at the *Srishail Parvat*[111], where you can have my 'Darshan'.

## Mahaprasthan to Kadali Van (A Banana-grove)

When Sriguru returned to the Sangam from Vaidur nagar104 he had resolved something in his mind and spoke to the disciples and devotees "Now I will not return to the Muth. This is *Kaliyug*[112], the fourth age of this world. Very difficult time is going to come. Many Muslim people have started pouring into Ganagapur for the fulfilment of their desires and for the redress of their difficulties. The sacredness of the holy waters will get lost. So it would be better if I leave this place and go away. However, I am going away from here only in the manifested form. Before leaving, I will be installing *Nirgun Padukas*[113] here in the Muth, which would be a reservoir of my spiritual power for the benefit of my devotees. A devotee who comes here with full faith for the 'Darshan' of the Padukas will certainly get my blessings. Everyday in the morning I will take a bath in the Krishna River and then I shall perform religious ceremonials in Narasinhawadi under the Audumbar tree at the Sangam74 of Krishna Panchaganga Rivers. In the afternoon I shall remain at the Sangam of Bhima-Amarja Rivers. I shall be present in the Muth of Ganagapur in an attributeless form. All the devotees should maintain good conduct while performing all the religious rites. This will make everyone's life free from worries, diseases and more prosperous.

By so blessing, Sriguru along with his disciples reached Patalganga. There he took bath and performed the religious rites of the day. Then he told his disciples "prepare one float bedecked with flowers for me and place it in the river. My life's mission is over now. You all return to Ganagapur and try to relieve the sufferings of the afflicted people and lead them on a virtuous and devotional path. I shall be present there only in a mysterious form. When I reach the Kadali van at the foot of Srishail Mountain, then I shall send back *prasad92* in the form of flowers. After receiving the 'Prasad', all of you leave".

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[110] Kadalivan: Kardali forest. Banana Grove [Van: Forest]

[111] Srishail Parvat: Srishail Mountain. Srishail Mountain is a holy place of Lord Mallikarjun (Lord Shiva) in Andhra Pradesh where one of the twelve famous 'Lingas' of the Hindu God Shiva is located.

[112] Kali Yug: **Kali Yuga**** (lit. Age of Kali, also known as Iron Age), is one of the four stages of development that the world goes through as part of the cycle of Yugas, as described in Hindu scriptures. The other Yugas are Dwapara Yuga, Treta Yuga, and Satya Yuga.

In the Vishnu Purana, for example, the Kali yuga is described thus:

"In the Kali Yuga, there will be numerous rulers vying with each other. They will have no character. Violence, falsehood, and wickedness will be the order of the day. Piety and good nature will dwindle slowly... Passion and lust will be the only attraction between the sexes. Women will be the objects of sensual pleasure. Dishonest will be the bottom line of subsistence. Learned people will be ridiculed and put to shame; the word of the wealthy person will be the only law."

[113] Nirgun Padukas: Attributeless foot impressions on a stone worshipped as the trace of God or SadGuru

With the separation of Sriguru, all his disciples and devotees got struck with grief and they began to cry. In the meanwhile the Badshah of Bidar also arrived. After showering his favour of blessings on all the devotees, Sriguru went and sat on the flower-bedecked float placed in the middle of Patalganga River and shortly after he disappeared from view before the very eyes of the devotees. The devotees were at loss to understand as to when, how and where Sriguru disappeared.

After some time, a boatman came there with his boat. He said "On a distant river bank I saw a Divine ascetic seated on a flower bedecked float. He called me near and gave a message for all of you, to stop worrying and return to Ganagapur and maintain devotedness and virtuous conduct. Further the ascetic stated that after reaching Kadalivan, he would arrange to send flowers as blessings".

A little while later four *Shevanti* flowers came flowing towards them. From the disciples present there, Sayamdeo, Nandi, Narahari and Siddha, picked up one flower each. They returned to Ganagapur with praise and recollection of Sriguru.

This event took place on the day of Magha Krishna Pratipada Shake 1378, as per Hindu calendar and year 1456, Jan or Feb as per English calendar. That day Sri Narasinha Saraswati a.k.a Sriguru, the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya, completed his life's mission. In a hidden form Sriguru pervaded everywhere for the upliftment of his devotees. This virtuous day is being celebrated as Gurupratipada with great devotion at Ganagapur, Narsinhawadi, Audumbar, and other holy places.

## Gurucharitra

The description of the miraculous works of Sripad Srivallabh and Narsinha Sarswati, the incarnations of Lord Dattatreya, are narrated in the metrically composed ('Ovi' form of poetry) book 'Gurucharitra' written by Saraswat Gangadhar. This book is considered as spellbound 'Gurucharitra'. 'Gurucharitra' is thoroughly read and recited by the devotees in a prescribed manner. Innumerable devotees have attained wonderful and miraculous experiences by reading 'Gurucharitra'. Saraswat Gandhar, the descendent of Naganath, the son of Sayamdeo, composed this Book in the year 1440, as per Hindu calendar, and the year 1518 as per English Calendar.

**Due to Lord Dattatreya and his incarnations and the recitation of Gurucharitra, innumerable miserable and distressed devotees have been emancipated.**

## Expressing Diversity and Absolute likeness

The devotees of Lord Dattatrey have a Strong belief that Akkalkotnivasi Sri Swami Samarth and Sri Narasinha Saraswati are one and the same. Sri Narasinha Saraswati manifested almost during, the year 1300, as per Hindu calendar (Year 1378 as per English calendar), then he disappeared in Patalganga and appeared in Kadalivan during the year 1380 as per Hindu calendar and year 1459, as per English Calendar.

When Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj was in Akkalkot, on hearing his fame a European advocate desired for his 'Darshan'. Therefore, he travelled all the way from Kolkata to meet his Parsi friend at Akkalkot. After taking the Darshan he asked Akkalkot Swami Maharaj "Which place do you belong to? ". Sri Swami Maharaj replied, "First I started from Kadalivan at Sri Shail Mountain. While wandering about, I visited a City like Kolkata. While wandering in Bengal I got the blessings of *Kali Mata*[114]. Again while wandering on the banks of *Gangamata*[115], I have visited innumerable holy places like Haridwar, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Badrinath, Ayodhya, Dwarka and then I reached the banks of Godavari river. Then I visited Hyderabad. I was in Mangalvedha for a number of years. Then after visiting Pandharpur, Begampur, I reached Mohol village. After a few days, I came to Akkalkot. Now I have settled in Akkalkot".

When a gentleman by name Karve from Pune enquired, Sri Swami Samarth replied, "I am a Yajurvedi Brahmin. My name is Narasinhbhan. I belong to Kashyap Gotra and *Meen Rashi*[116] ".

Ganagapur is the principal place of Sri Narasinha Saraswati. Once when a worshipper from Ganagapur came to Akkalkot, Sri Swami Samarth asked him "What is the name of your deity? ". That worshipper replied, "He is known as Sri Narasinha Saraswati". Then Sri Swamiji said, "**My name is Narasinhabhan**".

Once people from Narasinhawadi, the sacred grove of Sri Narasinha Saraswati, came to Akkalkot to take the blessings of Sri Swami Samarth. They asked "Swami, who are you? Then Swami replied "*Mool Purush, Vat Ka Vriksha, Dattanagar*[117] ". Sri Narasinha Saraswati himself had told his devotees to go to Akkalkot, which indicates the absolute likeness between Sri Swami Samarth and Sri Narasinha Saraswati.

In Mumbai there was an elderly person by name Shree Krishnabuwa alias Thakurdasbaba. He was suffering from Leprosy. At the end of his pilgrimage he reached Ganagapur. He had brought musk with him to offer the same at the *Nirguna Padukas113* of Sri Narasinha Saraswati. However, in the meantime, he had a vision in his dream "Go to Akkalkot and take the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth". Then he came to Akkalkot. In this confusion he forgot to offer the musk at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth. When Sri Swami Samarth saw him, he spoke "Bring that musk which you have brought for me at once".

[114] Kali Mata: Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort.
[115] Ganga Mata: River Ganges. Generally referred to as Mother Ganga.
[116] Meen Rashi: Pisces sign of zodiac
[117] "Mool Purush, Vat Ka Vriksha, Dattanagar": I am the eternal Supreme Brahman with a background of banyan tree and originated from the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey

A gentleman by name Govindrao Tol, was suffering from severe stomach pain. As per his fathers, Chintopant Tol, advice he came to Akkalkot to take 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth. After taking the 'Darshan', he planned to visit Ganagapur since he lacked devotion towards Sri Swami Samarth. Though forbidden, he went to Ganagapur and stayed there for nearly two and half years rendering his service. Eventually he got a visionary insight to go back to Akkalkot and render devotional service.

Chintopant Appa Tol, father of Govindrao, was suffering from demoniac possession. Hence he went to Akkalkot and stayed there rendering devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth. His son Govindrao asked Sri Swami "Is it that your honourable presence also felt at the Bhima-Amarja *Sangam*? ". Sri Swami replied, "Yes, I am also present there". Once Govindrao got a vision in his dream that in the temple of Sri Narasinha Saraswati at Ganagapur, Sri Swami Samarth in person is seated, shining with splendour and wearing the Nirguna Padukas113 of Sri Narasinha Saraswati.

Maloji Raje Bhosle, the then king of Akkalkot regime, initially a devotee of Sri Narasinha Saraswati, would go to Ganagapur to attend the celebration. He got a visionary insight where Sriguru told him "I have already come to reside in Akkalkot. Then why do you come to Ganagapur? ". From that day onwards, king Maloji Raje started rendering devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth at Akkalkot.

A Brahmin was suffering from acute stomach pain. He went to Narasinhwadi and vowed in front of his deity Sriguru to offer Pedhas[118] worth one-rupee twenty-five paise, once his stomach pain gets cured. By the kind grace of Sriguru, he was cured of his stomach-pain, but he forgot to fulfil his promise. After about ten years, he had come to Akkalkot for some work and he went to pay his obeisance to Sri Swami Samarth. On seeing this Brahmin, Sri Swami Samarth angrily uttered, "*Matherchod*[119], you have forgotten the Pedhas".

A Brahmin earned a huge profit in the Stock Market. He didn't have any children. He had gone to Ganagapur along with his family and vowed in front of deity Sriguru that if he gets a child he would offer food for one thousand people. Eventually, he got a son but due to slackness in the Stock Market, he lost heavily and he died due to the severe shock. His wife, the Brahmin lady, became severely worried as to how would she be able to fulfil the promise made to Sriguru? Someone suggested her to go to Ganagapur and render devotional service to Sriguru. After a few days of rendering devotional service at Ganagapur, she got visionary insight advising her to go to Akkalkot and offer food to Sri Swami Samarth, so that her promise would get fulfilled.

Finally, the Brahmin lady came to Akkalkot and stood shyly in front of Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami called her near and spoke "Arrange meals for me". The Brahmin lady cooked sumptuous food and offered the same to Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami

[118] Pedhas: Sweet Meat. A sweet prepared from Milk ingredient. Generally Pedhas are a normal way to celebrate festivities and offerings to a Deity.
[119] Matherchod: Rascal. A very offensive abusive word used only in very derogatory way.

ate stomach-full and as a sign of this he belched. Then he spoke to her "Your promise of feeding one thousand people is fulfilled. Now go home".

Appasaheb Subnis from Pune was a rich man. Both the husband and wife were suffering from demoniac possession. They thought of going to Ganagapur and render devotional service to Sriguru. For this reason they both started their journey from Pune. Akkalkot is on the way to Ganagapur. They went to pay obeisance to Sri Swami Samarth. When they requested for the permission to go to Ganagapur, Sri Swami Samarth said, "You need not go to Ganagapur. I shall relieve you both from this demoniac possession". Right away Sri Swami relieved the couple from demoniac possession.

Balappa from Haveri, Karnataka, was a servant of Sri Swami Samarth. Balappa came to Ganagapur and started rendering severe devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth while staying in Ganagapur. Finally, he got a visionary insight there that "Go to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sriguru". Then he went to Akkalkot and remained there till the end, rendering service to Sri Swami Samarth.

A Brahmin from western Maharashtra had made a promise to Sriguru, Narasinha Saraswati, that if a son were born to him, he would perform the thread ceremony of the boy at Ganagapur. By the kind grace of Sriguru, the Brahmin got a son. To fulfil his promise he started to go to Ganagapur. On the way to Ganagapur, when he reached Akkalkot he realized that he had spent all his money and there was nothing left to go ahead. Therefore, at Akkalkot he approached Sri Swami Samarth and prayed to him "Now going to Ganagapur to fulfil my promise is beyond my reach. You are the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey. Kindly allow me to fulfil my promise here itself". Sri Swami accepted his request and the Brahmin performed his Son's thread ceremony in Akkalkot itself.

A Brahmin named Sridhar, from Karnataka, suffered from severe stomach-pain. He came to Ganagapur and started rendering service to Sriguru. Eventually, he got a visionary insight in his dream announcing, "Take the juice of the leaves of Sripuri (Neem tree-Margosa tree) mixed with dry ginger and rocksalt and your stomach pain will certainly be cured". When he woke from his sleep, he enquired with the people and the *Vaidyas* regarding the whereabouts of this Sripuri tree. However, no one knew. So became worried and remained in Ganagapur. After a few days, he got a second visionary insight wherein Sriguru himself directed him "Go to Akkalkot, Sri Swami Samarth will show you the Sripuri tree". Then he came to Akkalkot and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth and paid his obeisance. Sri Swami spoke to him "Oh! That *neem tree*[120] is called as Sripuri tree. Prepare juice from the leaves of the neem tree, add dry ginger, rocksalt and take the mixture for three days. Your stomach pain will get cured". Taking this medicine the Brahmin was fully cured and returned home happily.

One more Brahmin was suffering from severe stomach pain. He went to Narasinhawadi, the holy place of Sriguru and thoroughly read the *Guru-Charitra*

[120] Neem Tree: Margosa tree

(biography of Sriguru). Finally, he got a visionary insight from Sriguru saying "I have taken incarnation at Akkalkot as Sri Swami Samarth. Go there and your stomach pain will get cured". Because of his weak health he rode a horse and went to Akkalkot. At the time of starting his journey he made a mental resolve that if he reaches Akkalkot safely; he would offer 'Pedhas' worth one rupee twenty-five paise to Sri Swami Samarth. After reaching Akkalkot, he went Cholappa's house where Sri Swami Samarth was present. Near the entrance of this house his horse got stuck up. The horse could not be freed by any means. Sri Swami resting on couch was observing this. Sri Swami spoke to the Brahmin "Did you forget the 'Pedha' worth one rupee twenty five paise? ". The Brahmin immediately brought the 'Pedhas'. The horse that was stuck up also got freed and the kind grace of Sri Swami Samarth cured the Brahmin of his stomach pain. He then happily returned home.

This way Sri Narasinha Saraswati from his places at Ganagapur and Narasinhwadi advised his devotees to go to Akkalkot and Sri Swami also agreed to the same, solved all the hardships and agonies of the devotees. This clearly shows beyond doubt, that Sri Narasinha Saraswati and Sri Swami Samarth are one and the same entity without any distinction whatsoever.

Sri Vasudevanand Saraswati, otherwise called as Tembeswami of twentieth centuary, a great worshipper of Lord Dattatrey, was considered by the devotees as the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey himself.

A devotee of Sri Swami Samarth, named Bavadekar wanted to carry out a religious sacrifice at Narasinhawadi and so he approached Sri Tembe Swami at Narsinhawadi. Sri Tembe Swami told Bavadekar "Sri Swami Samarth of Akkalkot, your Guru, is the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself. After taking orders from him, perform the religious ceremony. Hence certainly it appears from the above, that Sri Tembe Swami considered Sri Swami Samarth as Lord Dattatrey Himself.

Tukojirao Holkar, the king of Indore, by hearing the great fame of Sri Swami Samarth came to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After taking 'Darshan' of Sri Swami, Tukojirao became highly emotional and he said "Sri Swami Maharaj, once you had given me 'Darshan' on the Abu Mountain and today this is the second time I get your 'Darshan'". Lord Dattatreya dwells at *Abu Mountain*[121] as well as *Girnar Mountain*[122].

Sri Swami Samarth along with his disciples was touring in the villages, nearby Akkalkot. An ascetic (Gosai) had undertaken religious ceremonials for a number of years, to get the 'Darshan' of Lord Dattatrey. **He came for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth and he got the 'Darshan' of Lord Dattatrey Himself in the form of Three heads (Trimukhi), Six hands (Shatbhuj), holding three-pointed spike or spear (Trident of Shiva-Trishul) and Gourd (Kamandalu). The ascetic (Gosai) prostrated at the lotus feet of Lord Dattatrey and said, "How can ignorant souls like us know the real identity of your Divine Form? You are**

[121] Mount Abu: a Mountain in Rajasthan.
[122] Girnar Mountain: A Mountain in Gujarath.

**actually the Supreme Being, Lord Dattatrey. I got accomplishment in my life by the very 'Darshan' of your Divine Form**".

The worshipper of the idols at Rameshwar in Tamilnadu was collecting money from the pilgrims who wanted to take bath in the holy waters of the *Koti Koop Tirth125*. He did not allow Sri Swami Samarth to take bath in the holy waters, without paying money. At this same instant worms started writhing in the holy waters of 'Koti Koop Tirth'. The worshipper became nervous and approached the *Shankaracharya*[123] of Shringeri Muth. Then the Shankaracharya went in a state of *Samadhi*[124] and observed that Sri Swami Samarth is not only an ascetic but infact an incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself. After realising the truth, all the people surrendered to Sri Swami Samarth. Only then the Tirth[125] got purified.

Vamanbua Brahmachari Badodekar was very studious of Vedanta. He wanted to get absorbed in the contemplation of *Brahma* and experience the knowledge given in the Vedanta. Hence he went to Ganagapur and carried out a thorough reading *Gurucharitra*[126]*.* Lord Dattatrey Himself appeared in his dream and blessed Vamanbua with the 'Darshan' and said, "I am personally present in Akkalkot itself. Hence do not wander".

Yashwant Mahadeo Bhosekar was a *Rigvedi Brahmin*[127]. An ascetic gave him visionary insight in his dream asking him to proceed to Mangalvedha, Solapur District in Maharashtra. There he got the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth and then he prayed "Maharaj, I have fully experienced that you are the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself in entirety". Sri Swami Samarth initiated Bhosekar and the fame of Bhosekar, as a saintly person, spread in all directions. He was popularly called as Dev *Mamlatdar*[128]. His Tomb is located in Nasik.

**From all the above incidents, it becomes clear that Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj was the complete incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself. In this incarnation of Sri Swami Samarth, Sri Narsinha Saraswati had also personally manifested. The manifestation of Lord Dattatrey, Sri Narsinha Saraswati and Sri Swami Samarth though taken separately, are but one and the same. They are the three forms of the same manifestation of Lord Dattatrey himself.**

[123] Shankaracharya: Shankaracharya, (Sankaracharya in standard transliteration) is a commonly used title of heads of mathas (monasteries) in the Advaita tradition. The title derives from Sankara of Kaladi, an influential theologian of Hinduism, who first established four mathas in the four regions of India. He was given the name Sankara at birth, and acharya is a title, meaning 'learned teacher'. As the first historically recognized teacher in the lineage, Sankara is also called Adi Sankara. (The Sanskrit word Adi means original/first.) The four institutions traditionally said to have been established by Adi Sankara are;
the Uttaramnaya matha, or northern matha at Joshimath, the Purvamnaya matha or eastern matha, the Govardhana matha, at Puri, the Dakshinamnaya matha, or the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, the southern matha, at Shringeri, the Paschimamnaya matha, or the Dwaraka Pitha, the western matha, at Dwarka. The heads of these four institutions are considered the principal Shankaracharya-s in India today.
[124] Samadhi: see Footnote 46above.
[125] Tirth: A pond of Holy water. Also see Footnote
[126] GuruCharitra: In this context it is the Biography of Lord Dattatreya
[127] Rigvedi Brahmin: A follower of Rigveda, the first of the four Vedas, Hindu Holy Scriptures. Also see Footnote 11.
[128] Mamlatdar: Taluka Magistrate

## Lord Dattatrey and the different forms of Incarnation

Lord Dattatrey was a divine manifestation of Mythology. Sripad Srivallabh was an ascetic and he preserved asceticism during his incarnation. Sri Narsinha Saraswati was also an ascetic. He also preserved the religious order of asceticism. In the year 14th or 15th century, there was a serious calamity due to Muslim invasion in India. During this transitory period Sri Narsinha Saraswati, by his actions advised Brahmins to carry on the duties as prescribed in the *Shastras42*. Sriguru gave relief to the lowest category of the people from their misery and directed them towards the devotional path. He even enlightened Muslims and the rulers of their period. Later on in the 18th century Sriguru manifested himself in the form of Sri Swami Samarth. This was the transition period of British invasion in India, and hence Sri Swami Samarth manifested himself in the most unusual form of an accomplished ascetic.

Therefore, during the period of his incarnation he exerted more importance on good conduct and devotion than the duties in regard to the four castes and four stages of life. Sriguru protected people belonging to all religions like Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis etc. from the three sorts of affliction viz. psychical or corporeal, physical or material and from fate. He then explained to them the secret meaning of religions. He also made successful attempts to lead them on to the path of devotion. These different incarnations of Lord Dattatrey pervades everywhere, are very dynamic in nature and prepared for the upliftment of all living beings.

## The Manifestation Day of Sri Swami Samarth

**The day Sri Swami Samarth manifested is taken as Chaitra Shuddha Dwitiya, year 1072 as per Hindu calendar and the month March or April of year 1150 as per English Calendar.** Haribhau alias Swamisut the beloved disciple of Sri Swami Samarth had perceived by his divine sight that Sri Swami Samarth had manifested in the form of a *Balayogi*[129] from a pillar on this day of Chaitra Shuddha Dwitiya, in a village Chhedikhedha near Hastinapur. On this day of Chaitra Shuddha Dwitiya Haribhau would come from Mumbai to Akkalkot and celebrate the anniversary festival of the birthday of Sri Swami Samarth in the presence of Sri Samarth.

Based on this lunar day well known astrologer Nana Rekhi had prepared the horoscope of Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami Samarth had approved this and then blessed Nana Rekhi with initiation. When Shri Rekhi went to Akkalkot for the first time along with his wife to take Sri Swami Samarth’s ’Darshan’, his wife Sakhubai’s past life got awakened and she was blessed by the ‘Darshan’ of Shree Swami Samarth in the form of Balayogi. That is why the anniversary festival of the birthday of Sri Swami Samarth is being celebrated on Chaitra Shuddha Dwitiya day.

Similarly, Sri Narsinha Saraswati had taken birth at Karanja Nagar near Akola (Washim District, Maharashtra State) on *Paush Shukla Dwitiya*[130] day. It becomes clear that Sri Swami Samarth himself is personally Sri Narsinha Saraswati himself. Hence

[129] Balayogi: Child ascetic
[130] Paush Shukla Dwitiya: Month of January as per English Calendar

there is a tradition of celebrating the manifestation day of Sri Swami Samarth on *Paush Shuddha Dwitiya130*.

## Kadali Van (Forest) To Akkalkot

Sri Narsinha Saraswati, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, disappeared in *Patalganga*[131], during the year 1459 and then went to 'Kadali van' at the foot of Srishail Mountain. Sri Swami Samarth, during the year 1838, appeared at Mangalwedha[132]. During these four hundred years period, Sri Narsinha Saraswati performed numerous known and unknown miracles. After coming out from *Kadali van110* he went to a desolate forest on the northern side of *Bhagirathi*[133] River and sat there completely absorbed in devout meditation. Nobody knew as to how much time passed like this. His body was fully covered by a growing anthill.

One day a woodcutter came there. He used his axe to cut the tree but that axe hit the anthill fell on Sriguru's thigh. Blood started oozing. This disturbed the meditative trance of Sriguru and he stood up. The woodcutter became very nervous but Sriguru manifested in the form *Sri Swami Samarth*[134]. The mark of the axe wound did remain on the thigh of Sri Swami Samarth.

From the forest on the northern side of Bhagirathi River Sri Swami Samarth went to Gangotri, a holy place in Uttar Pradesh. Then he came to Devalgram. There he installed his 'Padukas' and left the place. From there, he came to Rajur in Marathawada, Maharashtra. At Rajur Sri Swami Samarth installed a *Muth90*. The then Muslim King had given an estate as a gift to the Muth. Later, Sri Swami Samarth left Rajur, leaving behind everything there and went to the holy places Udupi in Karnataka and Pandharpur in Maharashtra. From there he came to Mangalvedha again in Maharashtra and appeared in the public during the year 1838.

During this period he became popularly known as 'Chanchal Bharati'. In Mangalvedha people called him 'Digambar Swami'. Sri Swami Samarth thus spent some time at Mangalvedha, Mohol, Solapur, Ganagapur all in Maharashtra and then during the year 1855 came to Akkalkot.

## A Chinese Couple

When Sri Swami Samarth manifested in Himalayan Region, during the same time a Chinese couple had come there in search of herbal medicines. They saw the *ajanubahu*[135] personality of Sri Swami Samarth. However, ignoring Sri Swami the couple remained busy in their own activities. Due to the beautiful natural surroundings they couple became possessed by lust and started flirting with each other without any regard

[131] Patalganga: The source of river Ganga in the Himalayas
[132] Mangalwedha: A town in Solapur District, Maharashtra
[133] Bhagirathi: River Ganges
[134] Sri Swami Samarth: Sriguru / Sri Narsinha Saraswati. Henceforth referred to as Sri Swami Samarth.
[135] Ajanubahu: One whose arms are long enough to reach the knees

to the presence of Shree Swami Samarth. Watching this strong sexually desirous activity of the couple, Sri Swami Samarth became very angry and taught them a lesson. Due to Sri Swami Samarth's displeasure over this indecent behaviour, the Chinese man got transformed to a woman and the Chinese woman into a man. Seeing this sudden transformation the couple got humiliated and they panicked. They realised that this transformation had taken place due to the displeasure of the ascetic who was present there. They then prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami and prayed for forgiveness. Then Sri Swami explained the couple regarding the ill effects of lustful desires and advised them to conquer them instead.

Later on, Sri Swami blessed the couple with kind grace, which transformed both to their original forms. Finally, the Chinese couple returned happily to their country.

## Shelter to a Deer

In the Himalayan region another miracle took place. Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj was sitting under a tree, fully absorbed in *atmanand*[136]. Near and around him some deer's were camping and jumping joyously. In the meantime, some hunters came there to kill them. Seeing those hunters the deer became aware of the danger to their lives and out of fear came to Sri Swami Samarth for shelter. Sri Swami Samarth fondled these deer's seeking shelter under him with great love.

In the meantime the hunters arrived. The hunters fired guns in the air to make these deer's panicky. However, the deer's did not panic since they had got the assurance of protection from Sri Swami. The hunters became angry and started abusing Sri Swami. They even fired guns at Sri Swami. Nevertheless, there was no effect on Sri Swami. Then Sri Swami picked up two small stones and threw the same at the hunters. The hunters were petrified and stood there like motionless statues. The hunters then realised their mistakes. They repented and prayed to Sri Swami for forgiveness. Sri Swami then showered his kind grace on the hunters and advised them to maintain love towards animals.

Out of those deer's, there was a male, a female and their two young ones. Sri Swami awakened the past life of this deer couple and reminded them "Oh! You were the Brahmin couple of Ganagapur in your past life. This female deer was your virtuous woman in the past life. You had a prosperous life with a house. Since you had afflicted pain to saints, you got this animal life. Since here was still some merit in your balance, you got my Darshan in this life". Then the deer couple remembered their past life. They prayed for the forgiveness and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami. Then Sri Swami blessed them with kind grace and said "At the proper time, you will take birth as human beings. You will also get my 'Darshan' in the southern place".

[136] Atmanand: Soul-Joy resulting from Divine contemplation

## Boon Granted To Tigers

While dwelling in Himalayan region, sitting in a cave Sri Swami Samarth would hold philosophical discussions with ascetics. At that time two tigers sitting at the entrance of the cave were keenly listening to the discussions. Listening to the speech of Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj would charm all the ascetics present there. By then, the kind glance of Sri Swami fell on the two tigers sitting at the entrance and listening. He spoke to the tigers "Scholars, why are you sitting at the entrance? You ride on an elephant and go on obtaining certificates of victory". To this the tigers replied, "Maharaj, by your kind 'Darshan' we have been blessed. Kindly be merciful and tell us as to why we got this life of tigers? ". Then Sri Swami spoke "In your past life, you amassed knowledge by learning, but you also became very arrogant and harassed saints and Brahmins alike to such an extent that you even managed to get victory letters by defeating them. Your arrogance has given you this life of a Tiger". Then both lay down on the ground and began to plead. Then Sri Swami said, "In this tiger's life, there is no movement. You will be born as Brahmins in your next life and then by gaining knowledge and rendering devotional service you can get liberated".

## Compassion towards Brahmin Lepers

In the holy place called Haridwar in Uttar Pradesh, there were two Brahmins. They were very strong. They became highly intoxicated with arrogance due to their strength. They would find pleasure in committing evil deeds like killing people after robbing them, and slandering saintly people. None was able to stop them from evil activities. Eventually due to these evil activities they started suffering from Leprosy. Their fingers and feet started rotting. Their families abandoned them. They started begging on the street repenting their evil acts.

But they still had a bit of good merit left from their past life, due to which they got an opportunity of getting Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan'. They both surrendered to Sri Swami and begged for pardon for their evil deeds. It was due to their past life's merit Sri Swami showered his kind grace on them. He touched their bodies by his lotus feet, which brought down the pain they suffered. Then Sri Swami told them "Now you can go, abandon your arrogance, egotism, self-conceit and spend your life in the constant repetition of my name. Then you will regain your happiness". By the kind blessings of Sri Swami, the Brahmins regained good health and happiness.

## Wicked Brahmin Slaughtering Cow

When Sri Swami Samarth was in Haridwar, an arrogant Brahmin came there and started asking Sri Swami "Who are you? Which place do you hail from? What is your good name? Where is your *ashram*[137]? ". Observing the evil-mindedness of the Brahmin Sri Swami spoke "First, let me know your acquaintance. In the past life you were a hunter. You had slaughtered a number of animals and fed yourself. You committed sins like drinking spirituous liquor, outrage on ladies. Since you had slayed the princess of

[137] Ashram: Hermitage. An **Ashram** (Pronounced 'aashram') in ancient India was a Hindu hermitage where sages lived in peace and tranquility amidst nature. Spiritual and physical exercises, such as the various forms of Yoga, were regularly performed by the hermitage residents. Other sacrifices and penances, such as Yajnas were also performed.

Hastinapur, the soldiers of the king had cut your nose and broke your head. Later on ferocious animals swallowed your body-flesh. Since some good merit from past life was still in your favour, you got this life of a Brahmin. But due to wickedness you have slaughtered a cow yesterday night".

Since all his sinful acts were exposed the Brahmin became nervous and started trembling. He prayed to Sri Swami for forgiveness. Then Sri Swami went to the Brahmin's house where a cow was lying dead. The Brahmin prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami and started crying. Sri Swami spoke "If you are really repenting for this act, then sprinkle this holy water available with me and awake that cow". As per the orders of Sri Swami the Brahmin awakened the dead cow. Out of repentance there was a complete change in the Brahmin and renouncing everything he started worshipping Sri Swami with full devotion.

## The Chief of Narayan Teerth

While journeying through different places Sri Swami Samarth reached Kutch Area (Gujarath). There is a temple 'Trivikram' and near the temple is Narayan Teerth (Narayan Lake). The chief of the temple would not allow pilgrims to take a bath in the Lake without paying. Sri Swami Samarth came there to a take bath, but the disciples of the chief stopped him. Sri Swami Samarth mysteriously disappeared from the scene and instead was seen seated on the surface of the Lake. Everyone present at the scene were mystified. When the chief learned about this miracle, he came running and prayed to Sri Swami for forgiveness. Walking on water, Sri Swami came to the bank of the lake. The chief prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami. Then he worshipped Sri Swami in the Shodshopchar66 way with full devotion and then fed all the Brahmins present with sweet dishes to their full satisfaction.

## Serpent Birth Due To Passion

A Brahmin took Sri Swami to his house. He offered Sri Swami meals. Sri Swami asked him "Where are your parents?". The Brahmin said that his parents have already left for the other world. Then Sri Swami said, "Look, over there your father is swinging the cradle, to put your baby to sleep". When everyone looked over they saw a serpent swinging the cradle. The Brahmin took a stick and went to kill the serpent. However, Sri Swami stopped him from doing so. Then Sri Swami took the serpent in his hands and spoke to the serpent "Is your passion still not fully satisfied? Look, your son was about to kill you". Then, to everyone's surprise, the serpent started speaking "Maharaj, I don't have any passion left. Kindly bless me with deliverance from this life". Then Sri Swami spoke "Go and stay in the lake. Later on, you will take birth in the family of an ascetic". The serpent happily went away. All the people present were amazed.

## Darshan Of Lord Krishna To The Blind Saint Soordas

Sri Swami Samarth came to Dwaraka, the holy place in Gujarath. At Dwaraka, there was a blind Saint named Soordas. He was very anxious to get 'Darshan' of Lord Krishna. Sri Swami Samarth went to his hermitage and called out Soordas and said

"Soordas, whomever you are calling with all devotion, I am that same person standing in front of you right now". Sri Swami touched the blind eyes of Soordas and he regained eyesight! Soordas saw standing before him, the dark blue coloured, and charming figure of Lord Krishna. He was fully satisfied. Out of awareness, he looked at the figure again and was surprised to find Sri Swami Samarth himself standing there, in place of Lord Krishna. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami, and prayed "I was blind by birth. By your kind blessings, I got this divine vision. Now kindly bless me with deliverance from this cycle of birth and death". Then Sri Swami Samarth blessed him with a boon to be a theologian.

## A Crippled Ascetic Regains Legs

Sri Swami Samarth, after going to Girnar Mountain in Gujarath, came to Hanumandhari. There was a crippled ascetic at Hanumandhari. After hearing about the great fame of Sri Swami he desired for his 'Darshan'. Being crippled, he was unable to go to Sri Swami; so mentally he started praying with all earnestness. Being omniscient Sri Swami heard the mental prayers of that crippled ascetic and just like a cow goes running to its calf to render help, Sri Swami too came to the crippled person. Then Sri Swami spoke to him "You crippled person, close your eyes, do not look back and come to me". Acting as per Sri Swamiji's orders, the crippled ascetic tried to take a step ahead and what a miracle! He regained his legs and started walking slowly and steadily and finally reached near Sri Swami. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami. After taking the blessings of Sri Swami the ascetic went on pilgrimage.

## A Girl Transformed into a Boy

There is a village Ambejogai in Marathawada, Maharashtra. Sri Swami being on constant travel reached Ambejogai and started staying on a nearby hill. A peasant girl would always take her animals to the hill to graze. Sri Swami came to know her. He would play with her. The girl's father, being very greedy to earn money, forced her to wear a boy's dress and then sold her as a boy to a rich man, who adopted her as his son.

Later on, the rich man selected a girl to marry his adopted son. He wanted to celebrate the marriage ceremony with great pomp. On the wedding day women from the girl's side came to their house to apply *Mehandi*[138] to the boy as per the prevailing custom. However, they started suspecting that the concerned bridegroom was not a boy but instead a girl. This created a big confusion in the rich man's house.

When the rich man came to know this truth, he became extremely unhappy and he complained to the king stating that a peasant had cheated him by giving a girl instead of a boy. The king gave his orders to kill the girl-adopted boy. Soldiers caught hold of her and took her to the hill. The girl was crying and writhing in pain. In that state of severe agony she prayed to Sri Swami Samarth with full devotion and earnestness. Sri Swami heard her earnest prayers and came running for her rescue. He became very angry on those soldiers and ordered them to call the king and the rich

[138] Mehandi: Henna

man. When the king and the rich man arrived there, Sri Swami spoke to them "Look there! Is that a girl or a boy? ". Everyone looked and to their great surprise saw a boy standing in place of the girl. Then Sri Swami spoke "Now arrange for his marriage". So saying Sri Swami suddenly vanished from sight.

Everyone present were highly astonished to see this miracle. They started acclaiming Sri Swami Samarth with continuous shouts of victory and returned home.

## A Devil at Rameshwar

Sri Swami, while being on a constant travel, reached Rameshwar[139] and sat under a tree there. A Brahmin who lived nearby strongly felt that the person sitting under the tree possibly might be a man of incarnation. Therefore he brought some *Naivedya*[140] for Sri Swami, who ate part of the offerings. The Brahmin repeated these offerings daily. One day when the Brahmin prayed to Sri Swami to bless him with a son, Sri Swami said, "A son will be born and that son will depart. Now go away". Then Sri Swami left the place. However, the Brahmin continued to bring and place food offerings for Sri Swami under the tree, daily without exception. His wife gave birth to a son, within a short time.

Whatever food offerings, the Brahmin would keep under the tree, a devil would eat it. The Brahmin was surprised to see that in the absence of Sri Swami, someone else eats the offering. One day when the Brahmin had been to the temple of Lord Rameshwar for 'Darshan', there he was surprised to see Sri Swami Samarth seated and glaring with splendour in place of Lord and instead of Rameshwar. Experiencing this miracle, the Brahmin started asking his son to come inside the temple and take Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan'. Nevertheless, his son became very much afraid of taking 'Darshan'. When the Brahmin caught hold of his son and forcibly brought him to the temple, his son started screaming loudly and died right there in front of Sri Swami.

In place of his son, the Brahmin saw a dreadful body lying there. The Brahmin and his wife started crying and prayed to Sri Swami "Maharaj, this son was born by your blessings, then how did he die now? ". Sri Swami spoke "I had told you in advance, that a son will be born and depart from you. Whatever food offerings you were placing under the tree, this devil would eat. The same devil was born to you as a son. I have liberated him from this devil's life. Now cremate this devil's body. Apply this *Bhasm88* to the devil's body. His body will diminish in size". After the cremation of the devil's body, the Brahmin came to Sri Swami and started praying, "Maharaj, I have become old now. I am childless. Please bless me with a son".

Then Sri Swami Samarth blessed him and said, "Now go home. You will get a son". After this blessing, the wife of the Brahmin gave birth to a son. The couple became very happy and they started devotional service to Sri Swami till the end.

[139] Rameshwar: A holy place in Tamil Nadu, South India
[140] Naivedya: Food offered to the Deity. An important element in puja. Also see Footnote 87.

## Alavani Buva Gets 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth At Puri

Alavani Buva of Baroda in Gujarath had gone with some people to Jagannath Puri, a holy place in Orissa. There, all these people fell sick because of fever. They were rendered immobile due to weakness. They were even unable to bring food from the market. Unexpectedly Sri Swami Samarth came and stood before Alavani Buva. Seeing the splendour and Divinity of Shree Swami Samarth, Alavani Buva offered his obeisance. Then offering his praises to Sri Swami, he asked, "Maharaj, where do you live? ". Maharaj replied, "All the places belong to me". So saying, Sri Swami vanished from that place.

Alavani Buva and his companions were amazed at this experience. Later, they saw sumptuous food served on leaf-plates placed for them. They all enjoyed the sumptuous food. They resumed their journey as soon as their health recovered. Finally they all reached Akkalkot in Solapur, Maharashtra. After taking 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth, they all remembered that, the great man, who helped them with sumptuous food at Jagannath Puri, was none other than Sri Swami Samarth himself.

## Arrival in Akkalkot

In this manner, after departing from Kadalivan110, Sri Swami spent long period of time deep meditation. Later he went on a pilgrimage and performed numerous miracles and then sometime during the year 1838, he manifested himself at Mangalvedha, Solapur in Maharashtra.

Sri Swami remained at Mangalvedha, for about twelve years, but stayed away from the public and in a desolate place. In this village there was a pastureland of a person by name Patvardhan, where Sri Swami normally would stay. Whenever he entered the village he would go and sit in a dirty place. Seeing this, some would call him *Digambar-bua*[141] and some others would name him *Veda-bua*[142]. He would perform a number of miracles, just for pleasure, which made people offer their devotion towards Him.

One day all of a sudden, he left Mangalvedha and went to a nearby village, Mohol. After passing sometime in Mohol, during the year 1854-55, he came to Solapur. At Solapur there was a gentleman by name Chintopant Appa Tol who became a devotee of Sri Swami. Chintopant was a Mamlatdar128 of the British Regime and he was a pensioner. He was appointed in Akkalkot State. **Only due to the invitation of Tol Sri Swami Samarth came to Akkalkot during the year 1856 and later on remained there till he took *Mahasamadhi*[143]. This is the reason he came to be known as Sri Akkalkot Swami or Akkalkotniwasi Sri Swami Samarth.**

[141] Digambar Bua: Naked Man
[142] Veda Bua: Crazy Man
[143] Mahasamadhi: Last conscious communion with God. Fully accomplished yogis have been said to consciously leave their bodies at their WILL and merge effortlessly into the transcendental Divine Bliss or the Supreme spirit.

In Mangalvedha Sri Swami Samarth stayed for quite a long period but he had maintained less relations with the public. Therefore only a few miracles were performed there. In Mohol and Solapur too he stayed for a little period. There also, very few miracles were performed. Then Sri Swami Samarth stayed for quite a long period in Akkalkot and he had transformed that land in to *land of his miracles* and in to a holy place of pilgrimage.

**Nobody knows accurately about the numerous miracles performed by Sri Swami in Akkalkot. Only those miracles, which have been told, written, and heard are available for the benefit of the devotees. Sri Swami got rid of the sufferings of afflicted people and uplifted poor people from poverty. People who had desire for knowledge were given proper advice. He had one important aim, to liberate people from suffering due to their ill fate, give them all happiness, and then lead them towards life's highest objective of divine truth. The very remembrance of the miracles of Sri Swami leads a man towards devotional life.**

## Who Else Is Magnanimous In This World Than Sri Swami Samarth

**Akkalkotnivasi Sri Swami Samarth has eliminated the sufferings of numerous people afflicted from ailments. There is no end to his kindness. Man becomes unhappy due to different types of ailments. Some ailments are troublesome and incurable. Everyone has to undergo sufferings whether rich or poor. Sri Swami Samarth, by his kind grace, was able to give relief to people from sufferings due to ailments**.

### Typhoid

Appasaheb Mane

Shri Vishwasrao alias Appasaheb Mane, the chieftain of Akkalkot State was a devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. He fell sick due to Typhoid. His health started worsening. It was impossible for him to go for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth. Hence one day, Sri Swami himself, came to see him. At that time, Appasaheb was unconscious. Sri Swami moved his foot three times over his body. Appasaheb recovered his health within two-three days.

### Stomach Pain

Old Vaishnav Brahmin

An old *Vaishnav*[144] Brahmin was suffering from stomach pain. He came to Akkalkot and started rendering service to Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami was silent for a few days. One day Sri Swami angrily spoke to him "Am I indebted to your father? Then why do you waste your life by coming to an ascetic like me? ". The Brahmin earnestly prayed to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, is there any other saviour for me than you? Kindly bless me". The merciful Swami softened and said, "go now, eat the leaves of that neem tree which is above your head, along with the dung of an elephant". The Brahmin ate those leaves accordingly. Next day he came back to Sri Swami and said "Maharaj, the leaves of that tree are very bitter". Then Sri Swami said "Oh! You eat the leaves of this particular branch of that neem tree". The leaves of that branch were very sweet and the stomach-pain of that Brahmin totally stopped. Then onwards the Brahmin became a great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth.

[144] Vaishnav: Devotee of Lord Vishnu

### Govindrao Tol

Shri Govindrao Tol, son of Shri Chintopant alias Appasaheb Tol lived in Solapur, Maharashtra. He had severe stomach-pain. His stomach had swollen and the body had become very weak.

No remedy was effective. The doctor suggested an operation to be carried out. In his Government job, Govindrao had to visit various villages for office inspection. On one of those days he went to Bijapur in Karnataka. Sri Swami Samarth became merciful towards this devotee. One night Sri Swami gave a vision in Shri Govindrao's dream. Sri Swami removed a ball of thread from the stomach of Shri Govindrao and said, "Now you go. You will become alright". By then Shri Govindrao woke up from sleep. He felt that his stomach was lighter now. Within a few days, he recovered fully. When his doctors heard about this, they were astounded.

### Gopalbua Kelkar

Gopalbua Kelkar alias Preetinand Swamikumar of Chiplun in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, served in the Railway Department. He was suffering from acute stomachache due to gas trouble. Various types of remedial treatment were done but there were no results. When the gas started moving in the leg, stomach or in the waist, he would suffer from unbearable pain. Gopalbua was unable to carry on his office duties or any other works and he had to stay home. There he tried all types of treatment but his health started getting worse. He was not able to eat or walk even two steps. Eventually he left home and came to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth. One day, Sri Swami appeared in his dream, moved his hand over his stomach and said, "I will wipe out your illness of acute pain".

By then Gopalbua woke up from his dream. Then he passed two metal round pots full of urine, which eliminated his pain entirely. Thus he completely recovered from the illness. Later on Sri Swami initiated Gopalbua, who then built a Markandi Math in Chiplun and started rendering devotional service to Sri Swami. Gopalbua also authored a book - a collection of miraculous works of Sri Swami Samarth.

### Govind Pant

Near Akkalkot, there is a village called Mamadabad. There stayed a gentleman named Govindpant Kulkarni. After taking meals he would suffer from severe stomach pain. He tried all types of remedial treatment but there was no result. At last he went to the holy place Ganagapur in Gulbarga Dist. Karnataka to render devotional service to Sriguru134 . At Ganagapur he got a visionary insight directing him to go to Sri Swami Samarth at Akkalkot. Accordingly, he came to Akkalkot. When he took 'Darshan' of Sri Swami, Sri Swami said, "Take 'Gomutra' (cow's urine) and 'Gomay' (cowdung), for seven days. In the past life, you had troubled an old cow, hence you are getting this stomach pain". Govindpant remained in Akkalkot and took cow's urine and cowdung. His illness was completely cured. Then Gopalpant returned home singing devotional songs in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth.

## Moraba Kulkarni

In Akkalkot, there was a devotee named Moraba Kulkarni. One night his wife started getting such an acute unbearable stomachache that in the middle of the night she went to jump in the well and die. Sri Swami Samarth sent his disciple and called her to his place. Sri Swami by his kind grace instantly cured her illness. Kulkarni couple were already devotees of Sri Swami. This incident made strengthened their devotion.

## Dropsy - Stomach Disease

A saint, on a pilgrimage, came to Rameshwar, which is a holy place in Tamilnadu South India. There he came down with a stomach disease called dropsy. He became so weak by this condition that he was unable to go continue on his pilgrimage. He became very worried. One night he got a vision. In his dream an ascetic gave him 'Darshan' and said "Go to Akkalkot, where you will recover from the disease". Then the saint found his way to Akkalkot. There Sri Swami Samarth was sitting near a well. There was a big crowd who were waiting for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami. However, in that crowd the kind glance of Sri Swami fell on this saint. Sri Swami called the saint near him and said, "You wanted to go to *Dwaraka*[145] and you wanted to take the *sagun* Darshan of Lord Krishna!" so saying Sri Swami Samarth manifested himself in the Divine form of Lord Krishna with four hands, each hand holding, a Conch, a Chakra (Wheel- Divine Weapon), a Mace, and a Lotus. Seeing this Divine form of Lord Krishna with all attributes, the saint lost his consciousness.

Then Sri Swami asked him to eat neem leaves for three days. By doing so, the saint was cured of his disease. He remained in Akkalkot rendering devotional service to Sri Swami till Sri Swami took his last conscious communion with God.

[145] Dwarka: A holy place of Lord Krishna in Gujarath. It is located in the Jamnagar District of Gujarat. It is on the mouth of the Gomti River into Gulf of Kutch. The city lies in the westernmost part of India. .Dwarka is rated as one of the seven most ancient cities in the country. The legendary city of Dvaraka in Hindu mythology was the dwelling place of Krishna. It is believed that, due to damage and destruction by the sea, Dvaraka has submerged six times and modern Dwarka is the 7th city to be built in the area.
Dvaraka is mentioned in the the Mahabharata, the Harivansha, the Bhagavata Purana, the Skanda Purana, and the Vishnu Purana.
The legend says that Krishna renounced war in Mathura for the greater good (and hence the name Ranchodrai) and founded (and settled in) Dvaraka. Sri Krishna killed Kamsa (his maternal uncle) and made Ugrasen (his maternal grandfather) the king of Mathura. Enraged, the father-in-law of Kamsa, Jarasandha (king of Magadha) with his friend Kalayavan attacked Mathura 17 times. For the safety of the people, Krishna and Yadavas decided to move the capital from Mathura to Dvaraka.
Land was reclaimed from the sea near the western shores of Saurashtra. A city was planned and built here. Dvaraka was a planned city, on the banks of Gomati River. This city was also known as Dvaramati, Dvaravati and Kushsthali. It had well organized six sectors, residential and commercial zones, wide roads, plazas, palaces and many public utilities. A hall called "Sudharma Sabha" was built to hold public meetings. The city also boasted a good harbour.
After Krishna left for the heavenly abode, and the major Yadava heads were killed in disputes among themselves; Arjuna went to Dvaraka to bring Krishna's grandsons and the Yadava wives to Hastinapur. After Arjuna left Dvaraka, it was submerged in the sea. Following is the account given by Arjuna, in Mahabharata:
"The sea, which had been beating against the shores, suddenly broke the boundary that was imposed on it by nature. The sea rushed into the city. It coursed through the streets of the beautiful city. The sea covered up everything in the city. I saw the beautiful buildings becoming submerged one by one. In a matter of a few moments it was all over. The sea had now become as placid as a lake. There was no trace of the city. Dwaraka was just a name; just a memory."
The Vishnu Purana states that "On the same day that Krishna departed from the earth the powerful dark-bodied Kali Age descended. The oceans rose and submerged the whole of Dvaraka."

### Piles

In Solapur, Maharashtra, there was a well-known lawyer named Narayan Parashuram Damle. He was a great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. He started suffering from Piles. He was bleeding badly. In spite of taking remedial treatment his health started getting worse. He became so weak that he was even unable to go to Akkalkot. So he wrote a letter to Sri Swami Samarth, praying for his recovery. Then Sri Swami ordered him to take cow's urine. After taking cow's urine for few days he was fully cured of his illness.

### Kidney Stone - Urinary Problem

Nandaram Sundarji Gavandi from Pune was suffering from severe urinary problem since three years. He spent a lot of money on remedial treatment but it did no good. His illness started getting worse by the day. Once he came in touch with Balkrishna Joshi. Joshi told him "You go to Akkalkot. By the blessings of Sri Swami, your illness will be cured". Joshi then applied the holy ash available with him to Gavandi's head. By the good effect of that holy ash, Gavandi felt better that day. Next day he went to Akkalkot. There he offered sumptuous meals to the devotees and gave money in charity. On a Monday he went to the temple of Lord Mallikarjun and to his great surprise, he saw Sri Swami seated in place of the Shivalinga96. Sri Swami gave him Darshan. By this miracle, Gavandi was so happy that he started singing devotional songs in praise of Sri Swami. Then Sri Swami blessed him with kind grace and cured his urinary problem permanently.

### Tuberculosis (T. B. )

In Mumbai there was a gentleman named Ramchandra Keroba Shenvi. He was suffering from T. B. In spite of all the remedial treatment there was no cure. Due to his ill fate he got one more shock in his life. The company where he was employed went in liquidation and he lost his job. He had heard about the greatness of Sri Swami. Therefore, he along with his mother went to Akkalkot. He dedicated sweets at the lotus feet of Sri Swami as prasad92 and prayed for his blessings. By the Darshan of Sri Swami Shenvi became very happy. Sri Swami was pleased and smilingly took a coconut, gave it to Shenvi and said, "What are you watching? Go home now".

After staying in Akkalkot for few days he returned to Mumbai along with his mother. Within a short period by the kind grace of Sri Swami he was cured of his illness and his health started improving. Shortly after he also got a good job. With unflinching faith he started rendering devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth.

### Delivery - Child-Birth

In Beed city of Marathawada, Maharashtra, a Gurjar Brahmin named Narayandas lived. One day a pilgrim told him that there is a *Yogeshwar Siddhapurush*[146] in Akkalkot. Narayandas expressed disbelief and said, "In this *Kali Yuga112* where is that fully

[146] Yogeshwar Siddhapurush: A cccomplished and divine ascetic of the greatest order.

accomplished and divine ascetic? All ascetics and saints move around showing wonderful works just as a means of their livelihood".

His was pregnant. Her delivery time was due but she was very restless due to pain since the child had got stuck up in the womb. Hence the delivery of the child was in question. Now Narayandas became very nervous. He had a strong feeling that this might have come up because of the critical comments he had passed on regards Sri Swami Samarth. As repentance he slapped his own face.

In the meantime Sri Swami Samarth himself appeared as an ascetic in his house. Narayandas prayed to Sri Swami to save his wife from the difficult situation. Then Sri Swami said "Go to Akkalkot, perform *Rudrabhishek*[147] and offer sumptuous meals to the Brahmins". Narayandas accepted the proposal and his wife delivered a son safely.

**One always remembers God in one's difficulties but one forgets God in happiness.** Narayandas got immediate relief from his extremely difficult situation. Now how would he remember about his promise? He failed to keep up his promise given to Sri Swami. His son became five months old. When his wife raised the topic of going to Akkalkot for the fulfilment of the promise, he started uttering abuses. He became crazy. He started tearing his clothes and started rolling on a heap of rubbish. Finally his mother and wife caught hold of him and brought him to Sri Swami Samarth, at Akkalkot.

Sri Swami slapped Narayandas and asked him "Have you become so rude and intoxicated? You need more slaps? ". Narayandas with his mother and wife stayed in Akkalkot for four months and rendered devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth. Then Narayandas became normal. He performed 'Rudrabhishek' and offered sumptuous meals to Brahmins as well as money in charity. He spent one thousand rupees. Thereafter he returned home happily along with his family.

### Blood from Naval

Balappa was an obedient servant of Sri Swami Samarth. One day, blood started oozing out through his naval. He got really sick. Could this news remain without the notice of Sri Swami and could it remain without his blessing of kind grace?

One day, lot of blood flowed through his naval and a piece of folded paper came out along with blood. When he opened the folded paper he saw some kind of black powder in it. Balappa then remembered that a merchant had fed him poison due to hatred. By the kind grace of Sri Swami Samarth, that poison came out and he was saved.

[147] Rudrabhishek: A ceremonial ablution of Lord Shiva

## Hole in the Throat

Near Akkalkot there is a small village named Lohagaon. A resident of the village Bapurao Kulkarni had a hole in his throat. When he would eat or drink anything it would come out of the hole. He tried all remedial measures but there was no use. Finally he went to Ganagapur a holy place of Lord Dattatrey, Gulbarga District, in Karnataka State. He arranged for reciting the *Gurucharitra126* and listened to the same with rapt attention. One night, he had a vision in his dream ordering him to worship the earthen idol of Lord Ganesh. He started worshiping the Ganesh Idol as per his vision. One day while worshipping the idol a serpent started to crawl upwards on his body. Bapurao got terrified and hastily got up. In that confusion the earthen idol of Lord Ganesh fell down and the serpent fled the scene. From that day onwards Bapurao started feeling better.

Once again Bapurao got a vision in his dream ordering him to sing devotional songs in the praise of Lord Vishnu. He knew that he lacked both, the knowledge of poetry and the art of composition. However, because of the vision he tried to write 'Abhang' (A species of metre, poetic rhythm, bringing religious hymns in the praise of God or Sadguru). Nevertheless, he was not able to write the fourth part of each verse or stanza. He composed 300-400 verses but in every verse the fourth part could not be written. This greatly bothered him and he became anxious. Then one day he got another visionary insight stating that Lord Dattatrey has reincarnated Himself in Akkalkot and so he should proceed to Akkalkot and surrender himself to Sri Swami Samarth to complete his work.

Bapurao came to Akkalkot and stood praying before Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami touched Bapurao's throat with his toe and placing his hand on Bapurao's head blessed him. The hole in the throat healed completely. Further, with the blessings of Sri Swami he was able to complete all the verses. Later on, Sri Swami blessed him with knowledge and he became a popular saint called 'Das-Bapu.

## Leg Injury

### Bambgard Saheb

In the then state of Akkalkot there was a wicked and powerful officer named Bambgard Saheb. One day Kondoo Nana, a devotee of Sri Swami, was washing his face in the well water of Khasbaag. At the same moment Bambgard Saheb was passing that way. "Are you not spoiling the water of the well? ". So saying, the Saheb abused Kondoo Nana and then kicked him two-four times with his boot. Kondu Nana complained to Sri Swami but Sri Swami kept silent at that moment.

After a few days Bambgard Saheb suffered an injury on the same leg with which he had kicked Kondoo Nana. He took proper treatment for the injury but it was in vain. Finally the doctor suggested cutting his leg as a preventive measure. Bambgard Saheb became helpless. He asked the Mamlatdar128 Moro Kashi to offer prayers on his behalf to Sri Swami Samarth for his cure. When Sri Swami heard the prayer he said "Fie upon you! You fool, why are you telling me? ". When Bambgard Saheb heard these remarks

he understood that Sri Swami is very angry with him. But, what is the reason for his anger?

One day Sri Swami himself went to Bambgard Saheb's bungalow. Seeing Sri Swami Bambgard stood up. He gave a chair to Sri Swami and then offered his salutation. Sri Swami passed on a volley of abuse and said "you fool, first you kick me and then ask me only for the medicine for your injury? ". Then the Saheb realised that Sri Swami is very angry with him since he had kicked Kondoo Nana. He then prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami and prayed "Please forgive me and suggest me a remedial treatment. I have undergone enough sufferings till now". Hearing his prayers Sri Swami got softened with pity and said, "Now go, crush the root of *aloo* vegetable in the water used for washing rice. Then drink that water and also apply it on leg injury". With this treatment Saheb was totally cured of his injury and he became perfectly normal.

## Bhosle's Wife

Appasaheb Bhosle's wife, a resident of Sawantwadi in Sindhudurg District, Maharashtra, developed injuries due to disease resulting in 8 to 10 holes in her leg. In spite of taking all remedial measures there was no relief. Then the Bhosle couple along with 8-10 people came to Akkalkot. After coming to Akkalkot they came to know that Sri Swami had gone to Wakdari hill. It was hot summer midday and they hadn't eaten anything yet, still they went up the hill to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Then Sri Swami said, "To give you 'Darshan' only I have come so far".

Bhosle offered *dhotees*[148], bed and pillows, and *koupeen*[149] to Sri Swami. Then Bhosle informed Sri Swami regarding the holes in his wife's leg. Sri Swami gave abuses and spoke to the lady "come here. How many holes are there in your leg? This is all the outcome of evil deeds in the past life. You have tried all the remedial treatments and you are fed up. Now you try this treatment". There was a *Kunda flower*[150] plant. Sri Swami touched that tree and said, "Rub the fruit of this Kunda plant into a paste and eat it. Then rub elephant tusk into a paste and apply it to the holes on your leg".

Sri Swami gave prasad of mango and coconut to the Bhosle couple, and then he got up and went to the cactus hill to sit. Sri Swami asked the Bhosle couple to go and take meals. Next day, Sri Swami returned to Akkalkot from the hill. Bhosle couple returned home after taking the blessings of Sri Swami. The hole injuries got cured completely. The couple developed such a faith for Sri Swami that they started visiting Akkalkot very often to get the blessings of Sri Swami.

## Jagannathrao

In Mumbai, there was a gentleman named Jagannathrao. He had a number of holes on both his legs. The doctor said that both the legs have to be amputated from

[148] Dhotees: A garment of males worn around waist passing under and tucked behind
[149] Koupeen: A loin cloth just covering private parts
[150] Kunda Flower: A kind of Jasmine flower

knee downwards. Hearing this he became nervous and his health started worsening. His friend advised him to go to Akkalkot. Jagannathrao and his family took a servant and a cook with them and came to Akkalkot. Then he took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' and prayed "Please bless me, either by saving my life with the restoration of both legs or by my final deliverance from this life".

Sri Swami was moved by compassion with his earnest prayers and said "You rascal, what is your pain? ". Hearing these words Jagannathrao's leg-bandages got opened up automatically and fell. Then his wife prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami and prayed earnestly to bless her *Soubhagya*[151] with a long life. Sri Swami nodded his head in assent. Ganapatrao Joshi who was familiar to Jaggannathrao said, "Now, take for granted that your illness is cured". Jagannathrao gave up all medicines and started taking the holy water used for washing the lotus feet of Sri Swami regularly.

One day, Jagannathrao came to know that Sri Swami had gone to a nearby village called Nargund. Sitting on the shoulder of his servant he went to Nargund to see Sri Swami. He prayed to Sri Swami "Maharaj, what should I do now? Kindly bless me to get relief from this pain". Then he took out the silver Padukas76 from his pocket and touched it to the lotus feet of Sri Swami. He again prayed "let my feet be saved or ruined. I will not apply any medicine to my feet except the touch of these holy silver Padukas". Sri Swami passed his bountiful hand over Jagannathrao's head and blessed him. After a few days Sri Swami spoke to him "Now you go home".

Jagannathrao returned to Mumbai. After a few days he was cured and became normal. At that time, there was a famous doctor by name Bhau Daji in Mumbai. When he heard about Jagannathrao, he was amazed at this miracle.

### A Boil on the Head

Bhimrao was one of the servants of Sri Swami. A big boil had appeared on his head that it looked as if he had two heads. Due to this deformity and ugliness he became very restless and people started passing irritating remarks by calling him as a man with two heads etc. Because of this ugliness he became very restless and sad. One day Sri Swami also called him as a man with two heads and started laughing. Bhimrao burst into tears and spoke to Sri Swami "Let people laugh at me, but you are always compassionate to the distressed and very kind to the devotees. It is your righteousness to wipe out the evils of a devotee. If you shower your kind grace on me and liberate me from the evils then why should anybody laugh at me? ". Sri Swami got softened with pity but he did not say anything. At night when Bhimrao was in sleep, he saw a vision in his dream that compassionate Swami passed his bountiful hand over his head.

When Bhimrao woke up in the morning he found that the boil on his head had already opened up and the pus had oozed out. He was very happy. Now only the skin of the boil was hanging on his head. Sri Swami gave him holy water and sacred ash.

[151] Soubhagya: Auspicious state of wifehood

Within a few days the hanging skin dried up and everything became normal again. Now the two-headed Bhimrao became single headed again.

### Numerous Incurable Ailments

Vamanbua Badodekar had a number of incurable ailments like kidney stone, cough, dysentery, rheumatism in the joints, burning sensation in the body, eye-disease and piles. Day and night he was restless due to pain. He was not able to eat. Every five minutes he had to go to discharge his bowels. Ayurvedic physicians as well as allopathic doctors had given up for his life. He had no strength even to sit on the bed. He was a great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. With great difficulty he pulled on his life doing *Naamsmaran81*, in that poor state of health. Then he wrote a letter to Sri Swami Samarth praying for his blessings.

One day he was very restless. He decided to commit suicide by holding his breath within, as done in *Pranayam*[152], by drowning himself, in the Soorsagar lake of Baroda[153]. Therefore he silently left his home and got himself drowned in the Lake. At that moment Sri Swami Samarth himself appeared right in front of Vamanbua. Sri Swami pulled him out of the water and slapped twice on his face and said, "You foolish donkey, why do you want to die when you still have a long life? Does anybody escape from this world till one undergoes all the sufferings as predicted by one's fate? Why do you get angry with me? Instead of going for complete absorption in God consciousness, why do you go for drowning in water? ". Sri Swami brought Vamanbua to his house and said "Sit here quietly, otherwise you will get more insulted". So saying Sri Swami disappeared from there.

That day after a long period Vamanbua went in deep sleep. When he woke up in the morning he felt that a major part of his pain had come down. After few days he got an order from Sri Swami to come to Akkalkot. Therefore, he went to Akkalkot. He learnt that Sri Swami had gone to the nearby village Maidargi. Vamanbua went limping and reached Maidargi. Seeing Vamanbua, Sri Swami spoke "Are you not the same person who had gone to get drowned in the lake? Has Soorsagar dried up? ". Vamanbua prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami. By the kind grace of Sri Swami, Vamanbua became perfectly normal.

Vamanbua Badodekar was a great devotee and a great *Sadhak*[154]. On account of his accomplishment, he came to be known as 'Brahmnishtha'. Sri Swami Samarth himself had blessed Vamanbua by giving him the idol of Lord Dattatreya, who personally installed this idol at Baroda. **Vamanbua has given the praise-worthy and detailed description of all the miracles of Sri Swami Samarth in his *Granth*[155], *Guruleelamrut*. Devotees read this blessed Granth composed in metrical form of verses with great devotion**.

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152 Pranayam: A mode of regulated breathing.
153 Baroda: Now known as Vadodara, Gujarath State
154 Sadhak: One who accomplishes by engaging oneself in a course of rites, observances acts and sufferings in order to obtain Moksha or emancipation.
155 Granth: A Sacred book

## Scorpion Bite

A scorpion bit Sri Swamiji's servant, Cholappa's wife. She became restless due to pain. Those days Sri Swami stayed Cholappa's house. Sri Swami threw his shoe in front of Cholappa's wife and asked her to put the scorpion bit hand inside the shoe. When she placed her hand in the shoe the pain would disappear, but as soon as she removed her hand from the shoe the pain would reappear again. Therefore, she placed her hand in the shoe and slept the whole night.

## Snake Bite

Once Sri Swami went along with his devotees to a nearby village called Idagi and took a halt in a *Maruti Mandir*[156]. There was a devotee of Sri Swami by name Ravanna. A snake bit him while working in his field. Unfortunately he died due to the snakebite. The people of the village brought his dead body to Sri Swami. A servant of Sri Swami, Baba Saheb Jadhav, placed Sri Swamiji's shoes on dead Ravanna's head. Seeing this, Sri Swami got very angry and started throwing abuses at Baba Saheb. Finally Sri Swami asked Baba Saheb to loudly call on Ravanna by his name. As soon as Baba Saheb called his name Ravanna woke up and sat, to the great surprise of onlookers.

## Leucoderma

### Vinchurkar

In the then state of Akkalkot, there was a regent by name Madhavrao Dadasaheb Vinchurkar (A regent is a person who rules when the regular ruler is absent or unfit). He was a great devotee of Sri Swami. Sri Swami would visit Vinchurkar's house every now and then. On every visit Vinchurkar would render great devotional service to Sri Swami. Once, a white spot (leucoderma) appeared on the thigh of Vinchurkar. He became very nervous and started worrying with the very thought that this white spot should not spread to other parts of his body.

Once, when Vinchurkar observed that Sri Swami was in a jolly mood, he offered his prayers to get him rid of the white spot. Sri Swami asked, "What is the spot called as? ". Vinchurkar replied, "It is called as white spot". Sri Swami asked him "What is that on your finger? ". Vinchurkar replied, "Ring". "What type of stone are you wearing on that ring? ". Vinchurkar replied "White stone". Sri Swami asked Vinchurkar to throw away the white stone ring. Then Vinchurkar got rid of the ring from his finger and put it on Sri Swamiji's finger. Few days later the white spot on Vinchurkar's thigh disappeared completely.

[156] Maruti Mandir: (Maruti: Lord Hanuman, Mandir: Temple). Temple of Lord Hanuman

## Lalsaheb

A North Indian Brahmin by name Lalsaheb worked as a servant in the then State of Hyderabad, South India. He suffered from white spot (leucoderma), so he was very worried. Acting on someone's suggestion he started performing religious ceremonials in the temple of Lord Venkatesh at Alawal. Lord Venkatesh's temple was famous for devotee's prayers getting answered (*Jagruth Daivat*). However, there was no result. So he returned to Hyderbad. One night in Hyderabad, he got a vision in his dream that one beautiful cow climbed the staircase of his house and went up to the top floor. When Lalsaheb went running to beat the cow, he saw a lustrous 'Yogi' wearing red-ochre colour costume, following the cow. Lalsaheb asked that Yogi "Who are you? To who does this cow belong? The door was closed, still how did the cow climb the stairs and come up? ". Then the lustrous Yogi spoke "This cow belongs to me. I am residing either at, Ganagapur or Solapur (both in Maharashtra). Nobody can stop us. Whenever and wherever required we show ourselves in this manifested or obscure forms".

Finally Lalsaheb woke up from his dream. The next day he met a gentleman who advised him to go to Akkalkot and take the blessings of Sri Swami Samarth. Therefore, Lalasahed left for Akkalkot. After reaching Akkalkot he was surprised to find the same lustrous Yogi wearing red-ochre colour costume and his beautiful cow as he had seen before in his vision. Seeing this miracle he prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth. Then Sri Swami spoke "Oh! You were trying to beat my cow. Are you so much intoxicated and rude? ". Lalsaheb repented for what he had done in his dream. Sri Swami ordered him to feed street dogs. Lalsaheb remained at Akkalkot and started feeding dogs. Then within few days itself all the white spots on his body disappeared and he was completely cured of leucoderma. He became ecstatic and he returned home.

## Thakurdas

There was a saint named ThakurdasBbaba alias ShreeKrishnaBaba in Mumbai who built a temple of Sri Swami Samarth. He was a devotee of Lord Dattatreya. He would always sing devotional songs from within his heart in the temple. Due to great misfortune he contracted leucodermia and white spots covered his entire body. One day Sri Swami took a burning wood from the fireplace and threw it towards Babaji. Babaji rubbed the firewood in to powder, then he added holy ash to it and then applied the mixture on his white spots. Within just a few days, all the white spots on his body disappeared completely.

## **Leprosy**

A man who belonged to a lower caste suffered from leprosy. He sustained himself by begging at holy places. Finally he reached Pandharpur in Solapur District of Maharashtra. There, *Pandharinath Lord Vithoba*[157], gave visionary insight to this poor man asking him to go to Akkalkot where his disease would get cured. Nevertheless, the leper did not pay any attention to this advice. Then he got a second visionary insight

[157] Pandhainath Lord Vithoba: A manifested form of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva in a single deity.

saying the same thing. Therefore, finally the leper came to Akkalkot and started taking Sri Swami Samarth's *darshan*, his *Teerth*[158] and *Naamasmaran*. He continued his devotional service for three years. One day he was blessed by the kind grace of Sri Swami. At that time a Brahmin had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Sri Swami spoke to him "There is an old sandalwood tree in your backyard. Bring it here and give me a piece of that sandalwood". The Brahmin did as advised and gave a piece of sandalwood to Sri Swami. Then Sri Swami gave that piece to the leper and said, "Rub this sandalwood and apply the paste on your body. The day when this piece of wood gets over by rubbing, that day you would be cured of leprosy". With these kind blessings of Sri Swami Samarth the leper started applying the paste of sandalwood and the day that sandalwood got finished, his leprosy disappeared completely. After this, he continued his devotional service for few more days and then happily returned home.

## Punjabi Leper

A Punjabi gentleman suffered from leprosy. Sri Swami was sitting on the railing of 'Sakhar well' along with his devotees. When the Punjabi gentleman came there, he immediately prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swami and prayed, "You have performed a number of miracles. So I have come to you". Noticing the gentleman's rudeness Sri Swami was annoyed and replied "Don't you see miracles performed by a Juggler too? After eating *burfi* [159] you go and enjoy with a prostitute. Are you so much intoxicated? Do you think of doing anything else except enjoying with a prostitute day and night? Do you really want to see the miracle? Then you see this miracle". So saying Sri Swami undressed himself of the only *loincloth40* worn by him. As the secret about his private life was exposed, shame overawed the Punjabi and then he surrendered himself at the lotus feet of Sri Swami.

The blessings of Sri Swami cured the Punjabi of leprosy within two months. Then by singing devotional songs in the praise of Sri Swami, that Punjabi returned home.

## Excretion for Leprosy

A Brahmin suffering from leprosy came to Ganagapur to render devotional service. After rendering service for a number of days, Sriguru, appeared in his dream and directed him to go to Akkalkot. Then the Brahmin went to Akkalkot and started rendering his service to Sri swamiji. One day he became so much distressed by the unbearable pain due to leprosy wounds that he prayed to Sri Swami "Maharaj, I cannot bear this pain anymore. I will get liberation from this suffering only if I die". The compassionate Sri Swami said, "Apply the excretion on your body". The Brahmin, after procuring the excretion of Sri Swami, applied the same to his body and then took bath. Within only four days, all the leprosy wounds on his body got cured. He recovered his health and remained there rendering his service. Only after getting the blessings of Sri Swami and with the permission to leave Akkalkot he returned home happily.

[158] Teerth: Holy water (or mixture of water and milk) given by a Sadguru or Deity. This water is considered to have divine energy of the Sadguru and is accepted as a blessing and is consumed by devotees.
[159] Burfi: Indian Sweetmeat. Generally prepared for festivities and special occasions.

### Asthma

A Brahmin suffered from Asthma and he was always restless. One day, with great confidence he prayed to Sri Swami and asked for suitable medicine. Sri Swami said, "Roast a sweet potato and eat it". When the Brahmin started eating the roasted sweet potato, within three days itself his asthma got cured.

**In this way, Sri Swami, cured different ailments or diseases of his devotees by his kind blessings. However, just for namesake, he would recommend some petty medicines. In fact these petty medicines were not medicines in reality but they carried the kind grace of Sri Swamiji. Those impossible diseases which were not cured even by long medical treatments were cured by the use of simple neem tree leaves or by *charan-Teerth*[160]of Sri Swamiji. Devotees still remember the compassionate nature of Sri Swamiji. For the ailments and diseases, which come due to one's fate, no medicine can help but only the kind blessings of Sri Swamiji.**

### Demoniac possession

Sri Swami Samarth had liberated a number of devotees from demoniac possession by his simple sportive plays.

#### Tailor from Solapur

One day Sri Swami Samarth had gone to village called Basal, which is near Akkalkot. At that time, a tailor from Solapur, Maharashtra, had come there along with his family for Sri Swami Samarth's Darshan'. By merely glancing at the tailor, Sri Swamiji said, "Would you not feed me? ". The tailor made all the necessary arrangements. After the food was ready, the tailor gave bath to Sri Swamiji, worshipped him, performed *Aarati*[161] and then offered sumptuous food to Sri Swamiji. After Sri Swamiji accepted the food, the tailor came and sat in front of Sri Swamiji. All of a sudden the tailor got demoniacally possessed and started swinging. He started screaming. He started dancing and then said, "Where is the necessity for an ascetic to show such plays? ". Sri Swamiji kept silent for some time and started watering the tailor. Then suddenly he spoke "Fasten the hands of this rascal at the back". Simply by listening to these words of Sri Swamiji; the tailor became helpless and fell down. He started praying, "I am an orphan. Please shower your kind grace on me and show me the way".

Listening to the tailor's prayer Sri Swami Samarth got filled with compassion and he blessed the tailor with kind grace. The tailor got liberated from the demoniac

[160] Charan-Teerth: Holy water obtained from washing the lotus feet. Considered to have divine energy of a Sadguru or deity.
[161] Aarti: A very important part of worship in which the devotee waves a lamp around the Sadguru or Deity and simultaneously sings devotional hyms.

possession and returned home happily. Then onwards on every full moon day he started going to Akkalkot on a pilgrimage to take Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan'.

### Govindrao

Govindrao, the son of Chintopant Toll, had severe stomach pain. One day unexpectedly Sri Swamiji came to his house and called Govindrao as 'goldsmith' and immediately there was a surge of psychic phenomena due to demoniac possession in Govindrao's body and he started admonishing Sri Swamiji. He started swinging and went near Sri Swamiji and said, "Why should an ascetic remain in one place just like a buried wooden stump? ". He went ahead to kick Sri Swamiji but the servants caught hold of him. Sri Swamiji silently went out and sat under the 'Audumbar' tree. The psychic went near Sri Swamiji and said, "Why should an ascetic stay in a village? ".

Finally, Sri Swamiji shouted angrily at Govindrao "You black-smith, bind the hands of this fellow with an iron chain weighing fifty *seers*[162]". Both the hands of Govindrao got entangled as though an iron chain weighing fifty seers bound them. Govindrao started shouting, "Maharaj, I am going to die. Kindly save me. I have offended you and committed great sins. Govindrao has taken my money. You tell him to return the money and then I will go away".

By that time, a Muslim devotee arrived. Noticing Govindrao he said, "The tree is undergoing a lot of hardships. Kindly give relief to that tree". Sri Swamiji said "A great man with a beard like you, has come here, why don't you yourself relieve him from the bind of that heavy chain? ". However, the Muslim devotee lacked enough courage to do so. A woman devotee had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' of. She went ahead. No sooner she touched Govindrao his hands got freed from the invisible binding chain. Within two-three days Govindrao got relief from his stomach pain to a great extent. Then Sri Swamiji said, "At the age of fifty-five you will be completely relieved from the stomach pain as well as the demoniac spirit of a deceased Brahmin". Eventually Govindrao got the total relief after the completion of fifty-five years.

### Shankarrao Daftardar

Shriman Shankarrao saheb was a record keeper in the regime of the then Nizam of Hyderabad. He was demoniacally possessed. He was also suffering from T. B. He had taken lots of medical treatment but there was no positive effect. He came to Ganagapur and performed number of religious ceremonials, gave money in charity and rendered devotional service. Finally, he had a visionary insight advising him to go to Akkalkot. At Akkalkot, with the help of Sundarabai who was a devotee of Sri Swamiji, Shankarrao saheb offered his prayers to Sri Swamiji. Hearing the prayers, Sri Swamiji got up and went to the graveyard of Muslims. One graveyard was kept ready there. He went and slept in that pit. When Sri Swamiji woke up from that grave pit, he told Shankarrao

[162] Seers: Indian measure of weight. One Seer = Two pounds.

saheb "Offer food to the *Fakirs*[163] and a sheet of cotton cloth at Sheikh Noor *Dargah*[164]". Shankarrao Saheb did accordingly. Within a few days he recovered his health.

Then as per the orders of Sri Swamiji, Shankarrao Saheb built a *Muth90* at Akkalkot spending thirty thousand rupees, then celebrated a festival with great pomp and later returned to Hyderbad.

### Shoe Thrown at the Brahmin Possessed by Ghost

A Brahmin was possessed demoniacally. He always behaved like a lunatic. His wife brought him to Akkalkot. She would collect alms and feed her husband but he would abuse and spit at people. The helpless lady somehow calmed down the victims. In the evening the Brahmin would become more mischievous and would run away without notice. With great difficulty he would get traced and caught.

One day, the possessed Brahmin started shouting, "There is no justice in the royal court of Lord Dattatreya. Sri Swamiji is beating me unnecessarily". In addition, he also started screaming. When Sri Swamiji asked the reason for his screaming, replied, "This Brahmin has not repaid my two thousand rupees. I was a poor man, hence I had to commit suicide, and then I became a ghost. Had he not swallowed my money, would I be, in this state of a ghost? Maharaj, please do justice in my case. If this Brahmin returns my money and completes my funeral rites, then I will go away". Sri Swamiji said, "Oh, he is a poor Brahmin". Hearing this the ghost said "I made this Brahmin poor and childless. Now let him return my money. I will not leave his body till he returns my money".

Hearing this Sri Swamiji started laughing. Sri Swamiji took a turban of a person and gave one tip of the turban in the hand of that person. An old wooden house, with a big hole was lying nearby. Sri Swamiji asked the person to put the tip of the turban in that hole and start pulling the turban. When that person started pulling the turban, the possessed Brahmin, began to writhe in severe pain. The entire body of the Brahmin started shrinking and stiffening. He started crying loudly and said "Maharaj, please forgive and release me. I will not demand for money. Whatever you say, I will agree for the same".

When the turban was pulled out completely from that hole, the Brahmin became unconscious. The Brahmin's wife started crying, and she prayed to Sri Swamiji, to save her husband. Then Sri Swamiji threw his shoe and hit the Brahmin. The Brahmin immediately got up and asked Sri Swamiji "What do you command me to do? ". Sri Swamiji said, "Go and sit on that tamarind tree". The ghost left the Brahmin's body and went away. Then the Brahmin regained his consciousness.

[163] Fakir: Muslim mendicant
[164] Dargah: A Muslim place of worship

Next day the Brahmin's wife worshipped Sri Swamiji, performed *Aarti161*, Sang devotional songs in the praise of Sri Swamiji and offered *Naivedya140*. She prayed, "By your kind grace, we have got rid of a great calamity in this life. How can I describe your kindness? Now what should we do?" Then Sri Swamiji threw his shoes towards her. Taking the shoes as blessings, the couple returned home. The lady (Brahmin's wife) started worshiping the shoes as blessings of Sri Swamiji with all devotion.

### Appasaheb Subnis

In Pune, there was a rich and respectable lawyer by name Appasaheb Subnis. Both husband and wife were possessed by a ghost. When the ghost would become active, the couple would be unable to eat or drink. They carried out a thorough reading of *Gurucharitra126* and performed various religious ceremonials but in vain. At last, both along with two to four people went to Ganagapur to render devotional service. On the way, they took a halt at Akkalkot for Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan'. By the 'Divine Darshan' of Sri Swamiji, Subnis couple were very much impressed. The couple wanted to go to Ganagapur to get rid of their pain. Therefore, they requested Sri Swamiji with prayers for the necessary permission to go to Ganagapur. Sri Swamiji said, "You need not go to Ganagapur. I will destroy the ghost". Then the couple continued their stay at Akkalkot itself by rendering devotional service such as reading Gurucharitra, collecting alms, circumambulation of the Audumbar tree etc.

Initially the ghost was very much intoxicated. However, as the devotional service increased the ghost started becoming more and more weak. Then the ghost broke into tears and started uttering, "What should I do now? I cannot continue to bear this harsh beating". After a period of five years, the ghost quit the couple's bodies and fled.

The lawyer, Subnis, stayed at Akkalkot and continued his legal practice. After a while the ghost started troubling the Subnis couple again. Then Subnis brought this to the kind notice of Sri Swamiji. Then Sri Swamiji said, "Why do you require this mediation? ". Subnis immediately gave up his legal practice and utilised the money earned by this legal practice to render devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Subnis's mother prayed to Sri Swamiji "Since my daughter-in-law is child-less, all this property will become useless". Then Sri Swamiji blessed Saraswati, the wife of Subnis, by giving a coconut and within a year itself Saraswati gave birth to a son. The entire family became devoted to Sri Swamiji and started visiting Akkalkot regularly to render devotional service.

### Removal of Poverty

**Poverty is a curse for mankind. However, individual fate forces people to undergo sufferings due to poverty. Sri Swamiji has showered his kind grace on a number of devotees to rid them of poverty and direct them to the virtuous path of devotion**.

## Basappa Teli

When Sri Swami Samarth was in Mangalvedha, Solapur District, Maharashtra, a poor man named Basappa Teli started rendering devotional service. Sri Swamiji would roam in the forests and Basappa Teli would follow him to render devotional service. Basappa's wife was making ends meet by doing odd jobs as a day-labourer. A number of days passed like this.

Once Sri Swamiji became compassionate towards Basappa and showered his kind grace. Sri Swamiji took him to the forest of Kathavan Village. By that time the sun had set and thousands of snakes were seen moving around in the forest. Sri Swamiji told Basapppa "Take as many snakes as you want. Do not be afraid". Basappa started trembling with fear. Finally, garnering some courage and repeating the name of Sri Swamiji Basappa caught hold of one snake, nearly two feet long, wrapped it in a piece of cloth and held it under his armpit. Sri Swamiji said "Whatever is under your armpit, take it with you and lead your life happily with your children. Now, go home".

Basappa returned home. His wife became very happy seeing the bundle brought by Basappa. She found gold equal to the size of the snake, which Basappa had picked up. Basappa's poverty was rid off. His family became very happy. Basappa continued rendering his devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. He continued going to Akkalkot every year for Sri Swamiji 'Darshan'.

## Weaver

A weaver, great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth, lived in Mangalvedha. He was very poor. He maintained himself by begging. After Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan' he started rendering service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. He continued the service for nearly three months. Sri Swamiji was pleased and showered his kind grace on him. The weaver got visionary insight and in his vision, Sri Swamiji told him "Your father was a big merchant. When he had been to the fair, at Pandharpur, he died. Your mother had already died earlier. Your father buried large amount of wealth under a *Tulsi*[165] plant in your backyard. Dig out that wealth". He went home after taking the orders of Sri Swamiji. He dug out large amount of wealth under the Tulsi Plant. He became very happy. His life changed completely. He continued rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji.

[165] Tulsi: The Tulsi (also known as Tulasi) plant or Holy Basil (Ocimum tenuiflorum) is an important symbol in many Hindu religious traditions. The name "tulsi" means "the incomparable one". Tulsi is a venerated plant and devotees worship it in the morning and evening. Tulsi grows wild in the tropics and warm regions. Dark or Shyama (Krishna) Tulsi and light or Rama Tulsi are the two main varieties of basil. The former possesses greater medicinal value and is commonly used for worship.
Tulsi has also been recognized by the rishis for thousands of years as a prime herb in Ayurvedic treatment. It has been traditionally used by Hindus, and now others, for its diverse healing properties. Tulsi is mentioned by Acharya Charak, in the Charak Samhita, the central teaching of Ayurvedic medicine written at least two thousand years ago, and in the Rigveda. Tulsi is considered to be an adaptogen, balancing different processes in the body, and helpful for adapting to stress. Marked by its strong aroma and astringent taste, Tulsi is regarded as a kind of "elixir of life" and believed to promote longevity.

## Bandoba Puranik

Bandoba served the ruler of the then Akkalkot state as a *Puranik*[166]. At that time, Shahaji Raje, father of Maloji Raje, was the ruler. The ruler had given in writing to Puranik that, in case he gets the ruling rights of the State, from the King of the then Satara State in Maharashtra, he would give a land worth of one thousand rupees as prize to Puranik. Shahaji Raje, got the ruling rights from the king of Satara State, but he forgot to keep up his promise to Puranik. Therefore, Puranik was started to request and remind Shahaji Raje regarding the grant of the prize land, but in vain. After a few days Shahaji Raje passed away and Puranik was disappointed.

Puranik would take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' on a daily basis. One day when Puranik narrated his problem to Sri Swamiji, Sri Swamiji said, "Have I not given you a *Linga96*? ". Puranik kept quiet. After the death of Shahaji Raje, ten gifts to be given in charity as per the convention of Hindu Religion, included land gift too. Chintopant Tol, the chief officer of the Royal Court, advised Maloji Raje, to give the land gift to Puranik. So the land was gifted to Puranik family from generation to generation. There was a temple of *Rameshwar*[167] on this land. The land also had a Stream flowing through it and lots of fruit trees. Sri Swamiji had promised him the *Linga* of Lord Shiva and Puranik got the Linga in the form of the temple of the Rameshwar Temple. Puranik became a very rich man.

## Good Fortune Of The Cook

A rich man of Prabhu Community had come to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. A Brahmin cook accompanying the rich man carried a plate in his hand with articles for worship and food offerings to the deity. When the Brahmin placed the plate in the presence of Sri Swamiji, Sri Swamiji roared, "You rascal, five thousand rupees are kept for you. Take that money and go. Do not forget to take that money". Listening to the words of Sri Swamiji, the Brahmin spoke "Maharaj, I am a cook. Where can I get five thousand rupees? ". Sri Swamiji kept silent.

Behind the place where Sri Swamiji sat, a Muslim mendicant and a black dog became visible. Pointing in that direction, Sri Swamiji asked the Brahmin cook to feed the mendicant and the dog. The Brahmin cook placed the plate containing the food in front of the mendicant and the dog. Both ate the offered food leaving behind five morsels of food, in the plate. The plate was brought home. There was confusion whether to eat the leftover food in the plate as *prasad* or not. The rich man made enquiries but nobody clarified his doubt. Finally he asked Sri Swamiji about the leftover food. Sri Swamiji replied "If you want to eat the food, then take it, else return it to me". So after returning home the rich man, and the others, accepted that food as *prasad*.

They went back to Mumbai. The Brahmin cook previously worked as a cook for the rich man's aunt. She was very rich. Observing the honest nature of the Brahmin cook she gave him rupees five thousand as gift. Later on, in future, the rich man

[166] Puranik: An expert in Puranas. Also see Footnote 51.
[167] Rameshwar: Another name of Lord Shiva.

Prabhu also became more prosperous. By the blessings of the leftover food taken as *prasad*, the poverty of the Brahmin cook was wiped off.

## Wife during Past-Birth

A Brahmin couple from Konkan in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, came and stayed in Akkalkot, to render devotional service to Sri Swamiji. At that time poverty-stricken *Teli*[168] with his children too had come for Sri Swamiji's blessings. One day as the Konkani Brahmin stood near Sri Swamiji waiving a *chowrie*[169], Sri Swamiji spoke to Radhabai, the Brahmin's wife, "Limbe (Possibly this might be her name in her past birth) come here, This *Teli* was your husband in your past life. You had given birth to these three children now accompanying this Teli. Extend your motherly love to them". Radhabai felt ashamed and the devotees present there were stunned.

Teli's children were all elder to Radhabai. When they came to know from Sri Swamiji, that Radhabai was their mother, they started calling her 'mother'. Suddenly her motherly love started blossoming. Radhabai embraced her children and fondled them with love. The aged Teli was overpowered with emotions and his eyes filled with tears. Sri Swamiji ordered Radhabai, "Limbe, go with Teli to his house. There under the coloured wooden pillar, you had buried a metal vessel filled with wealth for the use of Teli family. Get that vessel buried under the pillar and give it to this Teli. That wealth will drive away the poverty of this Teli and you also will give birth to a son".

## Govind Shastri

There was a gentleman named Govind Shastri in Akkalkot. He was a devotee and was free from worldly attachment. However, he had family worries. He strongly felt that if the maintenance problems of his family were taken care of then he would be free from anxiety and can wholeheartedly concentrate on rendering devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth. He would say, "I am really tired of carrying out the functions of being a family priest".

One day, at an opportune moment, he spoke to Sri Swamiji regarding the same. Sri Swamiji said, "In your backyard there is a betal-nut tree. Take whatever is buried under that tree and then live happily doing *Naamsmaran81*". Govind Shastri came home and started digging under the tree and lo! He got the buried treasure. Then Govind was freed from all the worries of Govind Shastri and he got engaged in rendering service to Sri Swamiji with great devotion. When Sri Swamiji took *MahaSamadhi* , Govind Shastri went to Banaras, the holy place of *Lord Vishwanath*[170] (Lord Shiva), now known as, Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh.

[168] Teli: A person who is in the business of selling Oil. Generally referred to as 'Oil Man'.
[169] Chowrie: A fly whisk made of feathers.
[170] Lord Vishwanath: another name of Lord Shiva.

### Kanoji Brahmin

In Mumbai there was a gentleman named Govindrao. He went on a pilgrimage to holy places and then came to Ganagapur along with a Kanoji Brahmin. There he started performing religious ceremonials. One day, both got a visionary insight wherein Lord Sriguru spoke to them "My personal SELF is present in Akkalkot. Go there and your wish will be fulfilled". Accordingly, both went to Akkalkot and started rendering devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Kanoji Brahmin would food to Sri Swamiji_and Sri Swamiji would accept the same. One day Sri Swamiji spoke to the Brahmin "In that mosque out of the village, a *fakir* is sitting along with a dog. Go and feed them food". The Brahmin went to the Mosque. Seeing the Brahmin, the fakir spoke "You are sent by Sri Swamiji. Give me the food offerings". The Brahmin placed the plate containing the food offerings in front of the fakir.

The fakir and the dog ate the food, leaving some *Vada*[171] and *Kheer*[172] in the plate. The Brahmin took the plate with the leftover *Vada* and *Kheer* and came to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji asked the Brahmin and Govindrao to eat the leftover *Prasad* of *Vada* and *Kheer*. Govindrao hesitated as to how to take the left over food, eaten by a fakir and a dog? However, the Brahmin ate the *Prasad*. Sri Swamiji became very pleased with the Brahmin and said, "Go to Mumbai. There you will get ten thousand rupees". He told Govindrao "Your devotion is still not ripe. Hence continue the devotional service".

Kanoji Brahmin returned to Mumbai. A rich merchant had just died. His widow wanted to give anonymous donation in charity. One day she sat at the entrance of her house with ten thousand rupees. She decided to give the anonymous donation to the first Brahmin who appears. By coincidence, Kanoji Brahmin happened to pass by that side. The merchant's wife gave the package containing the anonymous donation to him since he was the first Brahmin she came across. Words of Sri Swamiji manifested. The Brahmin happily returned to his hometown with continuous shouts of Victory in the praise of Sri Swamiji.

### Marwadi

A young man from Marwad, Rajasthan state, came to Akkalkot and stayed there to render devotional service unto Sri Swami Samarth. He would get several letters from his family to return home, but for three years he continued his stay in Akkalkot. One day his father and uncle came to Akkalkot to take him home along with them. When they asked for Sri Swamiji's permission, Sri Swamiji addressed the young man "Go home now and then come here whenever you wish to come". Taking orders from Sri Swamiji, they worshipped him and offered food to Swamiji.

Before leaving Akkalkot, they all went to Sri Swamiji for his 'Darshan'. At that time, Sri Swamiji was present in the locality of the *Mahar community*[173]. The young man

[171] Vada: Fried cake made of lentils andother grams.
[172] Kheer: Sweet dish prepared of milk and vermicelli
[173] Mahar Community: Depressed class of people. Generally performing low jobs and used to live on the outskirts of a village during those times. Mahar's would normally be seen as untouchables during those times.

prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed for his blessings and favour. Sri Swamiji spoke to him "There is nothing to give or take here. If you want any favour, pick up and take with you four bones lying over there". A big heap of bones was lying nearby. The young man nervously picked up four bones from that heap and put them in a cloth bundle. After reaching his home, he kept the cloth bundle containing the bones outside the house. Next day, when he went to pick up the cloth bundle, he found it very heavy. When he opened that bundle, he was surprised to find pure gold weighing five *seers162*. This drove away the poverty of his house completely. He became a dedicated devotee of Sri Swamiji. After a few days, when he returned to Akkalkot to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' he offered ten *tolas* of gold to Sri Swamiji. When he gave the details of this incident, all devotees came to know about this miracle. The devotees started continuous shouts of victory in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth.

### Prasad of Bones

One day, out of pleasure, Sri Swamiji went and sat in the locality of Mahar community. As usual, Sri Swamiji's devotees started visiting this locality for his 'Darshan'. A Brahmin afflicted by extreme poverty stayed in Akkalkot since a number of days rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji. He also went to the Mahar locality to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. At that time Sri Swamiji was playing with the bones, which lay there. He spoke to the Brahmin "Take away as many bones as you want". The Brahmin started hesitating and thinking as to how to touch those bones? Nearby, a servant of Sri Swamiji was present. He spoke to the Brahmin "What does your body contain? Is it gold or bones? ". At last the Brahmin felt ashamed and hesitatingly picked up two to four bone pieces and went back home.

Once he came home he kept the bundle of cloth with bones outside his house. Next day he felt that the cloth bundle was very heavy. When he opened the package he found gold instead of bones. He started repenting as to why did he fail to pick up more bones. One gets only that much as per one's luck. He considered himself happy. By that gold all his needs were met. He returned home by singing songs in the praise of Sri Swamiji.

### Bones Turned To Gold

A person afflicted with poverty went and stayed at Akkalkot for a short period to render devotional service unto Sri Swamiji. He would always stand with folded hands in front of Sri Swamiji. One day Sri Swamiji went and sat in the *Mahar* locality. This poor devotee also went there and stood before Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji said, "Take some bones and go home". The devotee started to hesitate taking the bones. However, only due to Sri Swamiji's command he picked up few bones, put them in a cloth, and kept the bundle at a distance far away from him. Again he stood there with folded hands in front of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji said, "Now go home. Why are you standing here?". Returning home the poor devotee found gold in that cloth bag. The kind-hearted Sri Swamiji got rid of his poverty forever.

### Lump of Earth Became Silver

A Telangi Brahmin with an intention of getting wealthy went on a pilgrimage. Eventually, he came to Akkalkot and stood before Sri Swami Samarth for his 'Darshan'. Sri Swamiji asked him "What do you want? ". The Brahmin replied, "I am annoyed by my extreme poverty. I am burdened with heavy debts. By your kind grace please relieve me from this burden". Sri Swamiji said, "I am an ascetic. Where is the money with me? If you want, you take away the earth from that heap". The Brahmin said, "What shall I do with this earth? ". Sri Swamiji said, "If you do not want, then go away". Just so to obey Sri Swamiji's orders, the Brahmin picked up a lump of earth, put it in his cloth bag and returned home. After walking for some distance, he felt that his cloth bag is getting heavy. So he opened the bag and to his disbelief found white pure silver instead of the earth, which he had picked up. He became ecstatic and returned home singing devotional songs in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth.

### Employment Worth One-Lakh Rupees

Ganesh Ballal Mulekar was a great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. He has written biography of Sri Swamiji in Marathi. Initially he worked as *bailiff*[174] in a court. His brother arranged for a clerk's job to Mulekar in Collector's office. However, bad luck took over and he was removed from the job because of his bad handwriting. He became very unhappy and he went to Sri Swamiji to get solace.

When Mulekar came to Akkalkot Sri Swamiji was seated on the bare street itself. Mulekar prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and paid his obeisance. Then he went to the town and prepared *Naivedya140* and brought it back to offer the same to Sri Swamiji. Nevertheless, Sri Swamiji did not accept the offering. Every day Mulekar would come with Naivedya to render his devotional service to Sri Swamiji. One day Sri Swamiji's servant asked Mulekar as to whether he could arrange to bring some curd for Sri Swamiji, since it was *Ramnavami*[175] the following day. Mulekar said, "Certainly. I will bring curd. Please help me. I have lost my job. Please pray on my behalf and ask Sri Swamiji as to when I will get my new job "

The servant prayed to Sri Swamiji. Then Sri Swamiji said, "You have got the job. Go now". Mulekar still had a little doubt. He prayed and asked Sri Swamiji "What would be the salary? ". Then Sri Swamiji said "Worth one lakh rupees". Ganesh Mulekar wanted to go from Akkalkot to Ganagapur. He had saved the essential amount for going to Ganagapur. However, Sri Swamiji asked him to bring a coconut. Mulekar felt very bad as he had to spend those four *annas*[176]. But while walking on the street he got a eight-anna coin.

Mulekar returned home from Ganagapur. To his surprise he found an appointment letter for the post of a clerk in the Collector's office waiting for him. Within a few days his salary was raised to Rupees twenty, and posted in Assistant Collector's

[174] Bailiff: A Class III employee of the court
[175] Ramnavmi: The birth day of Lord Rama celebrated on ninth day of the first half of Chaitra month as per Hindu calendar and March or April month as per English calendar
[176] Annas: One Indian rupee equals sixteen annas.

office. Same day he was transferred to Akkalkot and there he got an opportunity to render devotional service to Sri Swami Samarth. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, he became a Head clerk within five years. In the same year he became Assistant Collector of Revenue. **Ganesh Mulekar, who was removed from the service on the grounds of bad handwriting, the same person went on getting promoted to higher posts by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji. Moreover, Ganesh Mulekar became an exclusive devotee of Sri Swamiji. By the kind blessings of Sri Swamiji, Mulekar got a job worth one-lakh rupees.**

### Madhavacharya

There lived a learned Brahmin by name Madhavacharya in a village Shirgur located on the bank of Bhima River. He was in heavy debt. His wife had passed away. He started going crazy. Ultimately he came to Akkalkot to seek refuge at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth. No sooner Madhavacharya came under the look of Sri Swamiji; he said, "Be alert for the auspicious wedding" and gave coconut as a blessing to the Brahmin.

All the attendant devotees started making fun of Madhavacharya. This annoyed him and so he complained to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, people are making fun of me. In this old age, how I can get married? My age is nearing fifty years now. I am also under burden of a heavy debt of rupees five thousand". Sri Swamiji said, "Go back, the way same way you came here". So after taking the 'Darshan' and blessings of Sri Swamiji, the Brahmin returned to his relative's house at village Shirol.

There were two marriages planned on the very next day at the residence of his relative. At the very auspicious moment the bridegroom planned for the elder daughter did not turn up, so her father got her married to Madhavacharya. Thus the kind grace of Sri Swamiji was showered on Madhavacharya. When he went back to Akkalkot along with his newly married wife, Sri Swamiji blessed the couple "Go home. You will be freed from the burden of your debt and you will live long happily with your children and grand children". Within a period of few days, Madhavacharya got relieved from his heavy debt and he was also blessed with a son in due time.

### Nawroji Parsee

A Parsee gentleman named Barjor was employed in Akkalkot. His relative Nawroji came to his house. One day, all though the night both were talking about something. Barjor did not believe in the numerous miraculous works of Sri Swami Samarth. All of a sudden Sri Swamiji appeared before them. Nawroji prostrated before Sri Swamiji, offered his obeisance, and then prayed, "I am burdened with heavy debt. Kindly relieve me from this debt and bless me with prosperity". Sri Swamiji said, "If you get wealth what would you offer me? ". Nawroji replied, "I promise to offer one-fourth of the wealth at your lotus feet". Sri Swamiji said, "Go towards Narmada River". So saying Sri Swamiji disappeared from there.

The next day Nawroji came to know that Sri Swamiji has gone to a nearby village, Rampur. So he went to Rampur to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Sri Swamiji said, "There is a call from Gujarath. Go there". Therefore, Nawroji came to Mumbai and learnt that there was a call from the king Malharrao Gaikwad of the then Baroda State. He went to Baroda. The king offered him abundant wealth in honour and gave him a responsible job of bringing Sri Swamiji to Baroda. Sri Swamiji did not go to Baroda but Nawroji got enough wealth. As per the promise, he worshipped Sri Swamiji utilising the one-fourth of his wealth in that devotional service.

### Krishnam Bhat

**I**n those days Sri Swami Samarth was in Mangalvedha village, Solapur District, Maharashtra. In this village, there was a Brahmin named Krishnam Bhat Kapashikar, who was well-versed in Vedas and Shastras. He never accepted his daily food without taking the 'Darshan' of all the temples in Mangalvedha. When Sri Swamiji came to Mangalvedha for the first time, he sat in the temple-shrine of the Saint Shree Damaji Pant. When Krishnam Bhat went to this temple-shrine he was very surprised by the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and made kind enquiry "Maharaj, may I know about you and your origin?. It's going to be night shortly. Kindly favour me and come to my house and purify it". Noticing Krishnam Bhat's true feelings of great devotion Sri Swamiji went to his house.

Offering a seat for Sri Swamiji, Krishnam Bhat asked his wife to prepare sumptuous food. His wife Geetabai became very worried as to what to cook since there was no rice in the house. Sri Swamiji, intuitively, came to know about the shortage of rice in the house, and said, "I like *dashami*[177]. So, prepare the dish with whatever is available in the house". Geetabai went out to bring milk but the situation was such that she could not even get milk. She came home and told her husband about the unavailability of milk. So both the husband and wife, fully ashamed of the situation, stood before Sri Swamiji. Then Sri Swamiji said "Having a cow in the house why are you going out in the search of milk? ". Geetabai said "Maharaj, the cow does not give milk and she has been totally unproductive for the last four years. What to do? ". Sri Swamiji said "Is that cow, not giving milk? Bring a vessel and start milking the cow. She will certainly give milk".

Therefore, Geetabai started milking the cow. To Geetabai's pleasant surprise, the cow gave three seers162 of milk. The Brahmin couple became ecstatic. Geetabai immediately prepared 'Dashami and offered it to Sri Swamiji. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji Krishnam Bhat's poverty was completely wiped off from that day onwards.

### Bavadekar Puranik

In Kokisare village, there was a Brahmin Puranik, well versed in Puranas57, named Bavadekar. He was stricken by extreme poverty. So he left the village along

[177] Dashmi: A flat bread prepared in milk

with his mother and wife and came to Akkalkot to render devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth. He maintained his family by collecting alms. Now with the intention of rendering devotional service, he procured the mythological book, 'Srimad Bhagwat', to read in the presence of Sri Swamiji.

One day, when Puranik read the first verse in that book by sitting in front of Sri Swamiji, Sri Swamiji shouted at him "Stop this non-sense. Who asked you to read this book? ". Puranik became distressed and left the scene. Next day when he again tried to read the book, Sri Swamiji rebuked him "You rascal, go away from here". However, Puranik stuck to his routine stubbornly and tried, on a daily basis, to read the book. However Sri Swamiji would drive him away by verbal abuses.

Puranik became very disappointed. He knew that Sri Swamiji was always merciful towards poor people. But possibly, his position might be insignificant and worse, than that of the poor people and he did not deserve favour or mercy from Sri Swamiji. Thinking such he became dejected and silently left the village. Then he went to a nearby hill and sat in a cave. When Puranik did not return home his mother and wife became very anxious. They started searching for him. Two days went by. On the third day they came to Sri Swamiji with this tale and started crying. Sri Swamiji was smiling after hearing their woes. Puranik's mother prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. At that time, a dog named Moti, was sitting near Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji asked Moti, "Go and bring that Puranik here". That dog went to the hill, caught hold of Puranik from the cave and dragged him back. Puranik prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and washed them by his tears.

After a few days, Bavadekar Puranik had a dream, which showed that in his previous birth, Puranik was a butcher. He had slaughtered a number of cows and animals. Nevertheless, he had carried out one virtuous act. A Brahmin was shivering with cold on the riverbank. At that time Puranik offered a *dhotee148* and a blanket. As a result of this virtuous act, Puranik was born as a Brahmin in this life but because he had slaughtered animals, Puranik, his mother, and wife suffered from sickness and poverty. When Puranik woke up from the dream, he was very surprised and started thinking about his dream.

Next day when Puranik went to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', suddenly, Sri Swamiji spoke "Instead of realising the sins committed by oneself, you are blaming other people. You rascal, what should one say about your understanding? Do you remember as to how many animals you had slaughtered in your past birth? ". Listening to this, **Puranik prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and started praying "Maharaj, even if I make you wear the shoes prepared out of my own skin or I give away my life at your lotus feet, it shall not compensate for all the sins, which I had committed in my previous birth. Nevertheless, the very touch of your lotus feet has blessed me in this birth as well as in all my future births. Now I shall not give up the blessings of your lotus feet throughout my life".**

He became a unique devotee of Sri Swamiji. Within a few days, he got freed from all his worries.

## Narasappa

One day Sri Swami Samarth was sitting in a street side shop. Narasappa was going to his farm. He prayed to Sri Swamiji to come to his farm to eat *hurda*[178]. Sri Swamiji went to the field along with his attendants. Narasappa had even brought sugar canes to eat. Sri Swamiji tested the sugar cane juice and buried the shreds of the sugar cane in the field. Taking this as a clue, Narasappa grew sugar cane in his field. There was a good harvest of sugar cane this time. Narasappa earned twenty times more income from the sugar cane crop.

## Bhau Rasool Sahukar

There was a businessman named Bhau Rasool Sahukar in Mumbai. Once he came to Akkalkot for Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan'. He worshipped Sri Swami Samarth in *Shodshopchar* way and prayed "If I get prosperity in my business I shall offer two hundred rupees in the devotional service". He then returned home. By the grace of Sri Swamiji, his business prospered but he forgot his vow.

One day Sri Swamiji appeared as a three-year-old child in his house. The Sahukar family was taking meals at that time. Seeing the strange child Sahukar asked, "Whose child is this? ". Then Sri Swamiji gave up the form of the child, manifested himself as ascetic and spoke "Are you giving my two hundred rupees or not? ". So saying Sri Swamiji disappeared. Sahukar started repenting for his offence. As repentance he went again to Akkalkot along with his family. He prayed to Sri Swamiji for forgiveness of his offence and offered two hundred rupees in the devotional service of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji asked him "That day in your house, did you not forget to offer any food to me? The guest devotees present here did not get even a morsel of food".

Sahukar repented for his serious offence and by making a solemn promise of offering sumptuous food to all the guest devotees, he returned home.

## Maharudrarao Deshpande

Near Ambejogai in Beed District, Maharashtra, there is a village called Kaej. In this village there stayed a *Rigvedi Brahmin*[179] named Maharudrarao Deshpande. He was very rich. The Nizam of Hyderbad had gifted him land. Unfortunately though, the Government seized his land. He tried his best to get his land released but he failed in his attempt. In the nearby Beed regime there was a saint. Deshpande took 'Darshan' of this saint and weeping before him, narrated his woes. The saint advised Deshpande to go to Akkalkot.

Therefore, Deshpande came to Akkalkot and stood before Sri Swami Samarth with folded hands. Before Deshpande could narrate his woes Sri Swamiji said, "Go to

[178] Hurda: Parched corn of tender pods
[179] Rigvedi Brahmin: A Brahmin who is an expert in Rigveda – Hindu Holy Scripture. Also see Footnote: 11.

Hyderbad where *Char Minar* is located. Your land will be released". Deshpande was surprised to hear Sri Swamiji's words. He took permission from Sri Swamiji and went to Hyderbad. Same day, The Government had given an order to release his land. Deshpande came back again to Akkalkot and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Till the end of his life, he remained devoted to Sri Swamiji.

**Govind Mohite**

In Marathawada, near Dharashiva, there is a village called Kajale. In this village a gentleman named Govind Mohite stayed. He was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. Once he came to Sri Swamiji and started praying, "Maharaj, my house-hold expenditure has gone up. How to maintain my family with respect? What shall I do? ". Sri Swamiji said, "Dig a well in your field and cultivate sugarcane crop as well as *haldi*[180]". Mohite replied, "I have dug up a number of wells in the field, but there is no water". To this, Sri Swamiji said, "Dig up the well between Audumbar Tree and Peepal Tree".

Mohite dug up the well between Audumbar and Peepal Trees But still he did not get water. So Mohite went running to Sri Swamiji, who said, "Break the head of that black elephant (Black Stone) and you will get water". Therefore, Mohite went back to the field and broke the black stone and plenty of water started flowing. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, he started reaping good harvest of sugarcane and *haldi*. Thus his worries disappeared.

This way by his miraculous works Sri Swamiji removed the poverty and difficulties of innumerable people. Even today a number of devotees experience the kind grace of Sri Swamiji in their difficulties.

[180] Haldi: Turmeric

## A Crippled Person Climbs the Hill

### A Cripple From Hanumandhari

Before his manifestation in Mangalvedha in Solapur District, Maharashtra, Sri Swami Samarth, while roaming from place to place, passed through holy places like Dwaraka and Girnar in Gujarath and finally reached a place called Hanumandhari. There a crippled person got the Divine Darshan of Sri Swamiji. He started thinking of Sri Swamiji "He is certainly some incarnated person. I have never come across a great personage like him till now. Being crippled, I am unable to go near this great personage. Oh! Lord! You are always merciful to the poor and very kind to the devotees. I pray to you to kindly walk up to here and allow me to take 'Darshan' of your lotus feet and get blessed".

The crippled person, out of distress, started rolling on the ground and blaming his fate for being unable to walk up to Sri Swamiji. Omniscient Sri Swamiji came to know from a distance and he spoke to the crippled person "You crippled person, close your eyes. Do not look back and come walking here fearlessly". On the orders of Sri Swamiji, the crippled person became spellbound; he stood up and started walking till he reached Sri Swamiji. Then he prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and washed Sri Swamiji's feet with his tears of joy. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji he was able to walk. He took the 'Divine Darshan' of Sri Swamiji and became fully satisfied by accomplishing his object.

### Jagannath rao

Jagannathrao from Mumbai had become crippled due to an injury he had suffered on his leg. In order to move around he had to sit on the shoulders of a servant and get going. He came to Akkalkot. As he took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' bandages on his legs dropped automatically. Then he started drinking the water, which was used to wash the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Within a few days his injury was completely healed. Then he collected the *Padukas* of Sri Swamiji and returned to Mumbai. Those doctors who had advised Jagannathrao to cut his legs off were highly amazed seeing this miracle.

## Dumb Person Starts Speaking

### Dumb Brahmin

A dumb Brahmin came to Akkalkot and rendered devotional service for nearly twelve years. Thus he completed his penance. Then one day he came under the kind grace of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji gave him the *Tambul*[181] from his mouth and said, "Eat this Tambul. And carry on your works". No sooner that Brahmin ate the 'Tambul', his speech was restored and started talking outright. Thus the dumb Brahmin was freed from his distressful condition.

### Dumb Manyaba

There was a Brahmin in Maindargi village. He had five children who were all dull. Unfortunately due to ill fate, the Brahmin, his wife, and four of his children died. Only one son named Manyaba survived. Manyaba was dumb and mentally dull. Being shelter less, for twenty-five years he was roaming about in the village. He would eat something and sleep anywhere. By sheer chance some people from Maindargi village came to Akkalkot to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. They brought Manyaba along with them. They made Manyaba prostrate on the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji for his kind mercy.

Then Sri Swamiji spoke "Dumb man, what do you want? ". Being dumb, what would he say? Those people accompanying him prayed to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, have kind mercy and cure his dumbness and mental dullness". Then they left Manyaba under the shelter of Sri Swamiji. Later on Manyaba remained at Akkalkot under the shelter of Sri Swamiji. Eventually after a while Manyaba came under the kind mercy of Sri Swamiji. He was dumb but now he learnt to talk in Marathi and Kannada languages. Later on he also gained some super human powers. He became a fully accomplished person.

[181] Tambul: A roll of betal leaves generally chewed by people for its juice.

## Blind People Gets Eyesight

### Chimatai

There was a rich lady in Pune, named Umabai Saheb. Her niece Chimatai Raste lost her eyesight after marriage. For nearly six years she underwent different types of treatments but all in vain. Ultimately they took Chimatai to Sri Swami Samarth at Akkalkot. Sri Swamiji asked Chimatai "What do you want? ". She was very young and fearless. She said "What else? I want my eyesight". Sri Swamiji said, "Why is it so difficult? Put the milk of a she-cat in your eyes for seven days and also drink that milk". After returning to Pune, she was treated by she-cat milk and she regained her eyesight.

### Nagoo Anna Lawyer

In Moregaon village of the then Hyderbad State there was a lawyer named Nagoo Anna Kulkarni. At the age of forty he lost his eyesight. He spent lots of money taking all types of treatments but in vain. Finally he came to a holy place Tulzapur in Osmanabad District, Maharashtra, to render service - circumambulating[182] the temple of *Goddess Bhawani*[183]. He rendered this service for nearly six months. One day a middle-aged lady wearing white saree came to him and said, "Don't continue here. Go to Akkalkot". Nagoo Anna was confused. However, the lady again appeared in his dream and ordered him to go.

Ultimately, he completed all the formalities of worshipping Goddess Bhavani and went to Akkalkot to render service to Sri Swamiji. When he reached Akkalkot Sri Swamiji was resting on a cot. Sri Swamiji said, "Why is this calamity sent to me? If one keeps silent such calamities will continue to come here". Then Sri Swamiji spoke to Nagoo Anna "Why have you come here? Go to Pandharpur[184]. Hearing this Nagoo Anna became angry and said "Six months I rendered service at Tulzapur. Goddess Bhavani directed me here for treatment. Now Sri Swamiji has directed me to go to Pandharpur. Saints and ascetics advise people in difficulties to approach Gods or Goddess for relief. So I went to Tulazapur and rendered my service to Goddess Bhavani. Had the Goddess told me that my eyesight would not be restored, then why should I undergo so much pain? ". He would continue to say more things but Sri Swamiji rebuked him "Now go to

[182] Circumambulating: Walking around the temple from left to right.
[183] Godess Bhavani: Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort.
[184] Pandharpur: Holy place of Lord Vithoba the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Pandharpur is a town in state of Maharashtra in Western India. Pandharpur is one of the most respected pilgrimage sites in Maharashtra. It is located on the banks of the Bhima river, which is also known as Chandrabhaga. Pandharpur hosts the famous Vithoba temple, on the banks of the river. Vithoba is considered to be Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu; Vitthala is said to have been derived from the word Vishnu in Kannada. Vithoba's consort is Rakhumai or Rukmini.
The worship of Vishnu - Vitthala at Pandharpur is derived mainly from the puranas and has been augmented by the contribution of the great Vaishnava saints of Maharashtra from the 13th through the 17th centuries (Dnyaneshwar, Namdev, , Sant Eknath, Tukaram).
This temple, covering a vast area, has a total of six gates. The eastern entrance to this temple is known as the Namdev gate. The sanctum enshrines a standing image of Vithoba also known as Panduranga, Pandhari or Vitthala.
Pandharpur hosts 4 "Yatras" in a year - of which "Aashadhi Yatra" is the one which attracts most (around 0.4 million) piligrims to Pandharpur. Piligrims take holy bath in river Bhima and usually stand in queues 3km long in order to take "Darshana" of lord Vitthala.

Pandharpur You talk big things and act as though you have come here bringing an order with you. Now leave this place and go away”.

Devotees present there convinced him to go to Pandharpur so that his desire would certainly be fulfilled. When he reached Pandharpur he learnt that a well-known eye-surgeon has come there. Then Nagoo Anna got his eye operation done through the surgeon. His eyesight was restored but some dimness in his sight still remained. There was some pain too in his eyes. So he again returned to Sri Swamiji and prayed “I am unable to bear this acute eye pain. Have kind mercy on me and give me relief. Then Sri Swamiji spoke “Treat your eyes with horse urine”. Nagoo Anna treated his eyes accordingly and within two days his eyesight was completely cured and the pain disappeared. Nagoo Anna continued rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji and happily returned home.

### Buffalo Urine Put In The Eyes

A lady was suffering from severe eye-pain. One day she prayed and told Sri Swamiji about her eye ache. Swamiji said “Put the buffalo urine in your eyes and it will get cured”. She tried this remedy for three days, which cleaned all the dirt in her eyes and improved her eyesight and got rid of her eye ache.

### Diwan Dinkarrao

In the then Akkalkot State Dinkarrao Anand was the Prime Minister. He started suffering from a peculiar eye problem. He would get burning sensation in his eyes day and night. So he was very bothered due to this pain. He tried allopathic treatment and Ayurvedic as well, but there was no use. Finally he told Shripad Bhat “Pray to Sri Swamiji and ask for some remedial treatment”. Therefore, Sripad Bhat went and prayed to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji gave him the remedy “Put elephant urine for three days in the eyes and the eyes will get cured”. The Prime Minister tried this remedy and within three days his eyes got completely cured.

### Blind Pandit

A Brahmin named Pandit was blind. He had been to Jagannath Puri. There, he came to know that Sri Swami Samarth had greatly favoured Alavani Buva and his companions. Sri Swamiji had cured them from blindness. During his wanderings Pandit came to Akkalkot. At Akkalkot he prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed “Maharaj, you are the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey. You have absolute power to destroy this universe and recreate it. I wish to take your ‘Darshan’ with my own eyes and get blessed. If you do not fulfil my wish and bless me, then I shall give up my life at your lotus feet”.

Pandit started crying and tightly embraced the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Hearing his cry filled Sri Swamiji with compassion. He took out the garland of flowers from

around his neck and threw it towards the blind Pandit. Pandit took the garland and with great devotion touched his eyes softly with it. The very touch of that garland restored his eyesight. With this miracle, Pandit got so much overcome by vehement emotion that he spoke “Maharaj I was blind by birth. By your kind grace I regained my eyesight. Kindly allow me to render devotional service at your lotus feet”. He returned home with great happiness and continued rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji.

### Janaki

There was a lady named Janaki from Pune. She suffered from some eye-illness and she lost her eyesight. She tried all types of treatment but there was no use. Then she came to Sri Swamiji at Akkalkot. While she was taking ‘Darshan’, Sri Swamiji spoke to her “Treat your eyes with elephant urine and you will regain your eyesight”. She did accordingly and her eyesight was restored. Then she worshipped Sri Swamiji and offered food as *Naivedya*. After this she returned home happily.

### Soordas

Before his manifestation, while wandering, Sri Swami Samarth went to *Dwaraka145* in Gujarath State. At Dwaraka, there was a blind saint who was known as Soordas. Sri Swamiji touched the eyes of Soordas with his hand. Soordas regained his eyesight and when he opened his eyes he was stunned to see Lord Krishna Himself, standing in front of him holding a conch, a chakra (A holy sharp circular weapon) and a mace. He became fully content by the ‘Darshan’ of his *tutelary* deity. Sri Swamiji, seeing his true devotion, blessed Soordas with a boon saying “You will get freed from threefold botheration and attain Divine Knowledge”.

## Liberation From Calamities

**Man faces a number of difficulties during his life either small or big, which makes him unhappy. During his incarnation Sri Swamiji has saved numerous people from their difficulties. He awakened full confidence in devotees and directed them on the path of devotion. Out of several such miraculous works of Sri Swamiji some known cases have been stated here.**

### Nathoba Treasurer

There was a gentleman in Akkalkot named Nathoba. He was a treasurer. He was a great devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. He would remain absorbed in *Naamsmaran*, 'Darshan' and worship of Sri Swamiji. At the same time, he would honestly carry out his job as a treasurer. Once a wicked person stole two thousand rupees from the treasury and then complained to the King of Akkalkot that there is shortage of money in the treasury.

The King and the Prime Minister, Dadoba Bhosle, investigated the case and confirmed the shortage in the treasury. Nathoba was arrested. He was crying continuously and trying to convince everybody saying "I have never taken even a single pie from the treasury, then how can there be a shortage of rupees two thousand? ". In an afflicted tone Nathoba started calling upon Sri Swamiji for help. Sri Swamiji who is always kind to his devotees heard his distress call. Next morning when the King and the Prime Minister came to Sri Swamiji for 'Darshan', Sri Swamiji spoke very angrily to the King "What type of mean and dishonest person are you? Is this the way of counting money in the treasury? Are you not harassing some poor man? You will have to repay heavily for your wrong act". Hearing these angry words of Sri Swamiji, the King and the Prime Minister, became nervous and very worried and they prayed for forgiveness.

After returning to the palace the King and the Prime Minister recounted the money in the treasury. There was absolutely no shortage. Both started repenting. Nathoba was immediately released from custody. The King and the Prime Minister requested Nathoba to forgive them for the wrong decision and requested him to attend his old duties in the treasury. Nathoba realised that this is the miraculous play of Sri Swamiji. He decided not to serve anybody in future, except Sri Swamiji. Therefore, he resigned from his job and continued rendering service to Sri Swamiji till the end of his life.

### Scarcity of Water

During a particular year in the then State of Akkalkot, there was severe scarcity of water. There was water shortage everywhere. People started performing religious

ceremonials like *Parjanyasookta*[185] and *Shivabhishek*[186]. Sri Swamiji, who was wandering at the time, reached village Jehur. There is a temple of a *jagrut daivat*[187], Lord *Kashi-Vishweshwar*[188]. Sri Swamiji went and sat in the same temple. Ceremonial ablution of Lord Shiva was in progress. People who were present in the temple started asking, "Maharaj, when will it rain? ". In this temple the idol of Shivalinga and Lord Ganesh were present. Swamiji asked these idols "Why does it not rain? Do you need grams? ". Sri Swamiji had grams in his hand; he threw those at the idols and sat in the *Dharmshala*[189]. In about half an hour, the sky started getting filled with clouds, wind started blowing fast, and within no time, there was downpour of torrential rain. Within surroundings of sixty miles it was raining continuously for three days. This solved the problem of water and the difficulties faced by the people of the village. All the people of the village worshipped Sri Swamiji.

## Missing buffaloes

Ganapatrao Hukir lived in a village called Borman, near Akkalkot. He possessed a number of cows and buffaloes. One day, three of his buffaloes were missing. He searched everywhere but in vain. He resolved mentally that if he gets back his missing buffaloes, he would offer one buffalo in the service of Sri Swamiji. The very next day a man came and told him that outside the village some buffaloes are crying loudly. Go there and check up. Ganapatrao went to the old building outside the village and found his missing buffaloes. He offered two lamp stands worth the price of one buffalo to Sri Swamiji.

## Inscription

In South of India, there are two villages known as Shivakanchi and Vishnukanchi. The *Vaishnavas*[190] had received these two villages as gift from the then government. Once the Government ordered the Vaishnavas to produce the necessary gift document, failing which, both the villages would be confiscated. Since there was no gift document with the Vaishnavs, the Government confiscated both the villages. Vaishnavas were seized by great anxiety. During those days Sri Swami Samarth who was wandering in south of India came to Shivakanchi village.

All the Vaishnavas went and sought shelter under Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji was overcome by compassion. He asked them to call the concerned Government officers. When the officers came there, Sri Swamiji spoke "Do you want to kill us all, on empty stomach, by confiscating both the villages? ". The officers said, "If we get any proof, the villages will be returned to them". Then Sri Swamiji replied, "You will find a stone in that river flowing in front. Everything is written on that stone". The Officers went there and removed the stone from the river. There was an inscription on the stone. All the

[185] Parjanyasookta : Repeating Vedic hymns regarding rain
[186] Shivabhishek: Ceremonial ablution regarding Lord Shiva
[187] Jagrut Daivat: The most awakened Deity. The one who fulfils the requests of his devotees.
[188] Kashi Vishveshwar: Another name of Lord Shiva.
[189] Dharmashala: A charitable institution meant for the accommodation of travellers (pilgrims).
[190] Vaishnavas: Followers and devotees of Lord Vishnu

details like the year, when the villages were gifted, the month, the day, the name of the person who had gifted, the reason for giving the gift etc. were inscribed on that stone. The officers released those villages. The Vaishnavas were so much pleased with this miracle that they all worshipped Sri Swamiji with full devotion and they offered *Naivaidya*.

### Pandu Goldsmith

In village Maindargi, there was a goldsmith named Pandu. He had lot of debts, so he was very worried. Once a rich man gave him gold prepare ornaments but he swallowed up that gold, and prepared ornaments using silver with a coating of gold and gave them to the rich man. Thus he saved himself from the heavy debt. However, within a few days his secret was divulged and he was exposed. The rich man filed a suit against him in the court. The court ordered caning his as punishment. Now Pandu became very nervous. Nevertheless, he was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. With full repentance, he started calling upon Sri Swamiji for help, promising not to make any such commitment in future.

Considering pandu as a most faithful devotee, Sri Swamiji got filled with compassion and decided to lift him out of the adversity. Sri Swamiji took bath in the morning. Giving up his bath, he called for a dolly (Palanquin), sat in it, and started off. At about 3:00 pm. he reached Maindargi village and then went straight to the office of the *Tahsildar*[191]. The Tahsildar got up, welcomed Sri Swamiji, and then offered his own seat to Sri Swamiji. At that time Pandu was standing there. Sri Swamiji called Pandu with affection and made him sit nearby.

The Tahsildar was rather surprised seeing the sympathetic feelings showered on Pandu by Sri Swamiji. He started preparing for the hospitality of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji asked Pandu to extend help to the Tahsildar in this preparation. Sri Swamiji kept Pandu busy in the service of self. Seeing the extent of compassion showered on Pandu by Sri Swamiji, the Tahsildar released him from custody and set him free. **It is always true, that the Lord, who is always kind to the devotees, comes running for help in times of their serious difficulties.**

### Stopped From going To the Royal Court

One day in Akkalkot the royal court was held to celebrate the festival of *Rangapanchami*[192]. At that time Chintopant Tol was the Prime Minister of the then State of Akkalkot. He wanted to go to the royal court but Sri Swamiji was personally present in his house at that time. Then how would he go to the royal court?

A messenger came to summon him but Sri Swamiji stopped him from going to the royal court. The messenger came for the second time and even for the third time,

[191] Tahsildar: An officer in charge of a sub-division of a district
[192] Rangapanchami: Festival of Colors. This festival falls on 5$^{th}$ day of the latter half of the month Falgun as per Hindu Calendar and March month as per English Calendar.

but Sri Swamiji did not allow him to go to the royal court. Chintopant Tol was rather confused and totally worried. Then Sri Swamiji angrily spoke "What would you do, if your throat is cut? ". Chintopant realised that something serious would take place in the royal court that day. He quietly remained at home without going to the court and did not worry even though he knew that the king would get very upset by his absence.

Later on it was learnt that there was a quarrel between the Chieftains. In that quarrel, Chieftain Baste went running to kill Chieftain Ganapatrao Khandagale. People mediated between them and stopped them. The King deported Chieftain Baste from the State. If Chintopant were to be present in the royal court at that time, he would have got involved in this serious complication. Hence Sri Swamiji who is always kind to the devotees had stopped him from going to the royal court.

### Vitthalrao

In the then Hyderabad State, there was a *tahsildar* by name Vitthalrao. Because of some bad deeds his service was terminated. He was worried that he would be imprisoned. So he hurriedly went to Akkalkot to take 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth. No sooner he stood there with folded hands Sri Swamiji angrily spoke to him "Smilingly you work, but afterwards run away in a crying mood. Were you so much intoxicated with the power of your job? You wanted to enjoy with the ladies and the money of other people. Do you consider me your father's servant? ".

Vitthalrao prostrated with repentance at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji, started rolling, and prayed earnestly "Maharaj, kindly forgive me. From today onwards, I will not commit such sins. Kindly save me. There is nobody else than you, in this world who can save me". Seeing the genuine repentance of Vitthalrao Sri Swamiji said, "Go away now, I have forgiven you for your sins, Henceforth act and behave properly and carefully". The Govt then declared him as 'not guilty' and he was made permanent in the post of Tahsildar.

### Worm-eaten Grams

The well-known Bhausaheb of Baroda in Gujarath State, came to Akkalkot to take Sri Swami Samarth's 'Darshan' . With great devotion he offered his humble salutation to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji gave him seven worm-eaten grams and said, "Go to your village and execute big work". Bhausaheb was very pleased by this blessing. After coming back to Baroda he got a big contract for execution. The seven people, who maintained hatred towards him, died of cholera. Then Bhausaheb remembered about the seven worm-eaten grams given by Sri Swamiji and thus started experiencing the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

## Earnest Desire for Offspring's

It is a fundamental right and an earnest desire of every man to bring up a child. Because of offspring's, there is a perpetuation of family tree and parents get exceptional pleasure as they bring up their children. Hence a man gets an earnest desire to bring forth his offspring's. Without children, man feels a great drawback in his life and becomes unhappy. Hence a person born as an incarnation blesses his devotees with offspring's and thereby awakens zeal towards God in that devotee. Sri Swami Samarth was very compassionate during his incarnation and had blessed numerous devotees with children by miraculous works.

### Bhausaheb Jahagirdar

Sri Swamiji once had been to the Naladurg village in Osmanabad District, Maharashtra. There he got a prayer of invitation from the *Jahagirdar*[193] of Neelgaon village, Shreeman Bhausaheb Jahagirdar, to pay a visit to Neelgaon. Sri Swamiji accepted this invitation and went to Neelgaon along with his attendants and devotees. Then the Jahagirdar applied *Akshata*[194] on Sri Swamiji's forehead. Out of that, three grains of rice fell down. Sri Swamiji picked up those three grains and gave them to Jahagirdar as *Prasad* . Then out of these three grains of rice Jahagirdar ate one grain and gave two grains to his wife. Jahagirdar had no offspring's. Sri Swamiji blessed Jahagirdar "A good son will be born to you". Bhausaheb Jahagidar, in the great honour of Sri Swamiji, arranged for *Mahapooja*[195], *Bhajan*[196], *Kirtan82* and *Brahmin - Bhojan*[197].

Sri Swamiji accepted the hospitality extended in his favour by Jahagirdar and then returned. In due time, wife of Jahagirdar gave birth to a son and then two daughters. Jahagirdar remembered this kind favour blessed on him by Sri Swamiji, till the end of his life. He always made it as a practice of visiting Akkalkot to render devotional service to Sri Swamiji for four days and then return home.

### Harivansh Puran

Bhausaheb of Baroda was a wealthy landlord. He had a daughter but no son. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and offered his prayers unto him for a son. Sri Swamiji blessed him "Listen to *Harivansh Puran57*, then you will get a son". Bhausaheb listened to the Harivansh Puran according to the rites and he was blessed with a son by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

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[193] Jahagirdar: One who holds the land gifted by the governmentnormally referred to as *Jahagir*. Generally considered to be very rich as a result of the land ownership.

[194] Akshata: Consecreted rice. Akshata: (Sanskrit) "Unbroken." Unmilled, uncooked rice, often mixed with turmeric, offered as a sacred substance during puja, or in blessings for ceremonies. This, the very best food, is the finest offering a devotee can give to God.

[195] Maha pooja: Solemn worship on great occasions.

[196] Bhajan: Singing hymns in the praise of God or Sadguru.

[197] Brahmin Bhojan: Sumptuous food served to all Brahmins as a part of service to Deity or Sadguru.

**Milk from Tree**

This incident took place when Sri Swamiji was in the village Mangalvedha in Solapur district, Maharashtra. In this village, a sixty-year-old man with his wife who was fifty-two years old stayed. Being childless they were very unhappy. Basappa Teli a great devotee advised them "You render devotional service to Sri Swamiji. Without 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji never accept any food. Then your wish will be fulfilled". The woman started to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' regularly with great devotion. Sri Swamiji was pleased seeing her devotion,. He told her "There is a tree on the other side. Take the milk of that tree mixed with sugar, then your wish will be fulfilled". The woman went near the tree, which was giving milk-Sap, collected that, added sugar and accepted the same. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji she was blessed with a son.

**Do You Want A Son?**

A European gentleman was served in Railway Department at Solapur, Maharashtra, as an officer. He didn't have any children. Hearing about Sri Swamiji, he came to Akkalkot. He stood before Sri Swamiji with a feeling full of devotion. Sri Swamiji looked at him and said, "Do you wish to have a son? Certainly your wish will be fulfilled and you will get a son within a year". Recognising his strong mental wish Sri Swamiji blessed him. The European gentleman was highly astonished with this kind of direct blessing coming from Sri Swamiji. Later, he returned home. By the blessings of Sri Swamiji he got a son within a year. He came again along with his wife and the child to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After this miraculous incident, a number of Europeans started visiting Akkalkot.

**Mate Blessed With a Son**

An old man named Mate belonging to Maratha community came to Akkalkot with his wife to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. His wife was sixty year old. They didn't have any children so both were very unhappy. Seeing their unhappiness Sri Swamiji blessed the old woman placing a cocoanut in the lap of her saree and said, "Take this son". And by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji she gave birth to a son within a year.

**Foolishness of Untouchability**

A Brahmin along with his wife rendered devotional service to Sri Swamiji. They didn't have any children. They earnestly yearned to have children. With this intention, they offered daily prayers to Sri Swamiji for his blessings and kind favour. Sri Swamiji told the lady, "Your destiny does not allow you to rear a child". The lady replied, "If it is not in my destiny then why should I go in search of God? ". With great stubbornness she continued her devotional service towards Sri Swamiji. One day Sri Swamiji gave her two dried date fruits and said "These are your sons, take them". The lady was very aware and sensitive about untouchability. She thought that people of different castes visit Sri Swamiji for his 'Darshan' and as such, there is a possibility of lower caste of people polluting it with their touch. She decided to take the 'Prasad' given by Sri

Swamiji only after taking a bath. Hence she went to the lake to purify herself for her bath.

To avoid this 'Prasad' getting lost in the water just by chance she buried the two dried date fruits in the sand. After taking bath she came home and forgot to bring the 'Prasad' along with her. At night she remembered about the 'Prasad'. However, she could not go to the lake since it was dark. Therefore, she went in the morning to the lake. She dug up the place where she had buried 'Prasad' but instead she found two eggs in place of the two dried date fruits. She picked up those two eggs. By that time both the eggs cracked, two birds came out of them and flew away.

When the people came to know of this, they criticised her for her foolishness in neglecting the 'Prasad' given by Sri Swamiji. She went crying to Sri Swamiji and narrated the incident. Sri Swamiji became very angry and said "You foolish lady what do you expect from me? Get lost from here". Sri Swamiji, out of anger gave her abuses. Nevertheless, she continued her devotional service with great determination. Pleased by her devotional service Sri Swamiji blessed her and gave her a cocoanut. Within a few days her strong desire of motherhood was fulfilled by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

## Jujube Tree

Ramkrishnarao Sirdesai from Mumbai served in Department of Railway. He had no children. So he came to Akkalkot along with his wife Annapoornabai. Sri Swamiji said "Render your service to Jujube tree, then you will get a son with the radiance of fire". However, Ramkrishnarao came to know that nobody goes round a Jujube Tree. Therefore, his wife Annapoornabai started going around the Peepal Tree instead. This did not serve any purpose. He asked saints and ascetics about this Jujube Tree. An ascetic named Brahmanand told him "You have not understood fully the true meaning of Sri Swamiji's words. Sri Swamiji calls Saint Sri Swamisut as 'Jujube Tree'." Ramkrishnarao along with his wife went to Sri Swamisut's Muth and started rendering devotional service. In due course Annapoornabai gave birth to a son, by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

## Prasad of Bones

A lady of Lingayat merchant community was childless. She came to Akkalkot to offer her prayers to Sri Swamiji. At the time, Sri Swamiji was sitting in the locality of *Mahar community*. A large bone piece lay nearby Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji picked up this bone and gave it to the lady with blessings and said, "Take this boy". However, the lady thought that touching the piece of bone, which had contact with untouchables, would pollute her. She did not go forward to accept the bone piece offered by Sri Swamiji.

At the time a lady belonging to the Mahar community, was sitting nearby and she had no children as well. She prayed to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj kindly bless me with a

son". So she extended her *Anchal*[198] with an earnest prayer. Sri Swamiji was pleased with her prayer and put the bone piece in her *Anchal* instead. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, good fortune dawned on the lady from the Mahar Community and she gave birth to a son.

### Jahagirdar of Abdulpur

In Abdulpur of Hyderbad State, under the then Government of Nizam, there was a *Jahagirdar* by name Deshpande who had two wives but no children. Deshpande was sixty year old. To earn God's favour he went to the holy place Ganagapur in Karnataka State. There he got a vision in his dream directing him to go to Akkalkot. So he went to Akkalkot with his wives. After taking 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji they stood in front of him.

Sri Swamiji said, "If a hundred gold coins donated, you will get a brinjal (daughter) and if a thousand gold coins donated, you will get an elephant (son)". And Sri Swamiji put a cocoanut in the *Anchal* of the first wife and then asked them to put the same cocoanut in the 'Anchal' of the second wife. Jahagirdar Deshpande worshipped Sri Swamiji in *Shodshopchar* way and arranged sumptuous meals to thousand Brahmins. Then Deshpande returned home by mentally offering continuous prayers to Sri Swamiji. Then in time, Deshpande got one son and one daughter by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

### Nagar Brahmin

Moreshwar Hari was a Nagar Brahmin staying at Burhanpur. He had no children. He came to Sri Swamiji and prayed "Maharaj, without a son, life becomes a total failure. Hence, kindly shower your grace and bless me a son". Sri Swamiji became compassionate towards him and gave him a cocoanut as a blessing and Moreshwar got a son. He named his son 'Datta'. Moreshwar carried out the first hair cutting ceremony of his son at Akkalkot itself. Then he arranged for sumptuous meals to the Brahmins and returned home by singing merits in praise of Sri Swamiji.

### Pandurang Jadhav

In Pune, there was a gentleman named Pandurang Bapuji Jadhav. He had four sons but unfortunately all the four sons died within a period of two months. Jadhav couple became very unhappy. Jadhav's wife Bhagubai was very pious. One day she listened to the biography of Sri Swamiji and she became his devotee. She started mentally repeating the name of Sri Swami Samarth regularly. One day she got a vision in her dream and Sri Swamiji spoke "If I give you a son, what would you give me in return? ". Bhagubai said, "I shall offer my son at your lotus feet and make him *Brahmachari*[199]". After few days she became pregnant and then she gave birth to a son. Then as per her promise she offered her son at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji.

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[198] Anchal: The border of her saree. Generally Women extend the border of their saree to accept blessings from a Sadguru or Deity. The blessings can be in various forms: coconut, cloth, rice etc depending on the Sadguru's wish at the time.
[199] Brahmachari: A celibate.

## Heir To The State

The King of the then Akkalkot State, Shriman Maloji Raje was a great and loyal devotee of Sri Swami Samarth. He desired for a son. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji Queen Rani Sahiba became pregnant. People asked Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, Our Rajesaheb will get a son or a daughter? ". Sri Swamiji did not reply straightway but said, "Bring a bangle". So as per Sri Swamiji's hint Rajesaheb got a daughter. The second time too, Rajesaheb got a daughter. Now for the third time Ranisahiba became pregnant. When people asked, Sri Swamiji made a dramatic gesture of handling a military handgun and said, "start simultaneous discharges of many fire arms" (i.e. he meant – *start celebrating*) and Rajesaheb got a son. He got his heir to the then, State of Akkalkot.

## Naivedya from Brahmin Lady

A poor Brahmin lady had brought *Naivedya* for Sri Swamiji with great devotion but the attendants were not paying any attention to her. She mentally started praying unto Sri Swamiji and took a seat away from the prime area. In the meantime Sri Swamiji spoke "Who has stopped Naivedya of that Brahmin lady? Bring your Navaidya here". The Brahmin lady came forward and placed the Naivedya in front of Sri Swamiji. He accepted the food with great love. He was pleased and blessed her "You will give birth to a mischievous boy". Hearing this the Brahmin lady became ecstatic. In fact she had no offspring till the age of forty-five. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji she became a mother of a son.

## Lord Hanuman In Darkness

A lawyer from Mumbai named Dwarakadas came to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. It was 7:00 PM and Sri Swamiji was taking nap on a cot. The lawyer burnt camphor in front of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji got up and spoke angrily "You have come to pray for a son and our Hanuman[200] is sitting in darkness. If you observe, Swamisut Maharaj is sitting in darkness in the temple of Lord Krishna". Dwarakadas went to the temple of Lord Krishna and lighted all lamps. Then Sri Swamiji asked the lawyer to bring grams. Sri Swamiji took the grams in his hand and started playing for nearly an hour. Later he gave those grams to the lawyer as *Prasad* . After a few days the lawyer became the father of a son.

In this world, a household person becomes very happy by begetting a son. This does not mean that without a son, parents will not get liberation from bondages of this world. Sri Swamiji did not agree with the understanding that parents having no male offspring will not get liberation from the bondages of this world.

[200] Hanuman: Monkey God as per Hindu religion and symbolizes extreme and pure devotion to Lord Rama

### No Liberation For Parents Having No Male Child

Once a *Puranik166* from South India had come to Akkalkot. He started displaying his knowledge in the presence of Sri Swamiji. He started saying "Person without a son will not get liberation from worldly bondage".

Listening to these words uttered by Puranik, Sri Swamiji said "Why do you cross the decorum of good manners and mode of *Puranas* and exhibit your meaningless learning here? How do you make a definite conclusion that without a son one will not get liberation from this worldly bondage? Did the parrot (Shukmuni, son of Vyas) had a son? Did the *lutanist* (means: Naradmuni25) had a son? Did Vamdeo had a son? You are also without a son, would you go to hell? Instead of singing the merits in the praise of God, what type of useless talk have you started? Why do you state your definite conclusions that a person without a son will not reach heaven? The deliverance from the bondages of life and death does not depend upon the son. If did depend upon the son, then dogs and pigs certainly would have attained this deliverance. Hence it is a fact that the deliverance and death or the attainment of heaven never depends upon the son. On the contrary, whatever sins a father commits for bringing up a son takes him to hell".

**Sri Swamiji never agreed with the established truths. He always blessed a childless person with a child with the sole purpose that a household person should experience happiness, which would eventually invoke sincere love towards God and start singing hymns in the praise of God.**

## One Who Is Protected By God

**Sri Swami Samarth during his incarnation period has saved a number of devotees from death and granted them new life.**

### Brahmin's Son

Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj went to Pandharpur and then came to Mohol, both in Solapur District, Maharashtra State, during *Hindu year Shake 1775* (1853 A. D.). He stayed in a cave of a hill. The son of an honest Brahmin of Mohol died unexpectedly. His mother started wailing loudly. The Brahmin and his wife cried and cried till they fell unconscious. Seeing their extreme sufferings people took pity on them. They all convinced the Brahmin saying, "A virtuous and lustrous ascetic has come to our village; offer your prayers to him for a remedy".

Therefore, the Brahmin went in search of Sri Swamiji and reached the cave. In an afflicted tone the Brahmin started earnestly calling upon Sri Swamiji for his kind help. Compassionate Sri Swamiji woke up from his deep meditation. He came out from the cave and spoke to the Brahmin "Revered Brahmin, get your son seated properly on a horse and send him across the sea". The Brahmin did not understand the true meaning of the words of Sri Swamiji. However, a lady devotee explained him the true meaning "Your work is done. Go home".

The Brahmin returned home and found his son woken up and was sitting. Then the Brahmin got dressed his son and adorned him with ornaments. He then seated him on a horse and took him for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Then the Brahmin worshipped Sri Swamiji in a *Shodshopchar* way and then offered food as Naivedya unto him. The Brahmin and his family remained fully devoted to Sri Swamiji till the end.

### Babasaheb Escaped From Death

In the then State of Akkalkot, there was a Chieftain named Babasaheb Jadhav. He was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji always called him 'potter'. Omniscient Sri Swamiji knew that Babasaheb's death is very close by. Sri Swamiji said, "Potter, a letter has come in your name (i.e. Your death is nearby)". Babasaheb became very nervous hearing this. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and entreated him earnestly "Maharaj, I still desire to render some more devotional service at your lotus feet". The kind-hearted Sri Swamiji looked and perceived the imperceptible and told Babasaheb "Go near that bullock". A miracle took place. The bullock standing in front, suddenly fell down dead and the death of Babasaheb was averted. Thus, by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, Babasaheb got a new life.

### Snake Bite to Ravanna Vani

Sri Swamiji along with his disciples and devotees went to village Idagi and took a halt in the temple of Maruti156. At that time a villager named Ravanna Vani was ploughing his field. Around afternoon at about 4 0'clock a poisonous serpent bit him. He started getting pain cramps, the snake poison started to spread throughout the body and eventually he died. People brought him to the Maruti Temple where Sri Swamiji was sitting. To give some relief to the dead man Babasaheb Jadhav placed Sri Swamiji's shoes on dead Ravanna Vani's head. Sri Swamiji woke up from deep sleep and started showering volleys of abuses on Babasaheb. People present there got scared and they ran away. Sri Swamiji took off his clothes and became stark naked. Babasaheb started trembling with fear.

Rebuking Babasaheb, Sri Swamiji spoke "You foolish fellow, who had asked you to keep these shoes on the head of a dead man? ". He asked Babasaheb to shake off his (Sri Swamiji's) clothes on the ground and call on Ravanna loudly. There were no signs of movement when Babasaheb called on loudly in one of Ravanna's ears. Then Sri Swamiji ordered him to call in both the ears. When Babasaheb started calling in both the ears, Ravanna woke up from his death-sleep. He was very hungry. Sri Swamiji asked Babasaheb to feed *Kheer* to Ravanna.

After taking *Kheer* he became fully conscious. In fact Ravanna had already died before they had got him to the temple. But Babasheb took Ravanna as being unconscious and placed the shoes of Sri Swamiji on his head. To keep up the honour of his shoes, Sri Swamiji himself endured the snake-poison, shook off his clothes, and restored the life of Ravanna. In fact, a person bitten by snake is never given anything prepared out of milk. Can there be anything else to match this incomprehensible miraculous work of Sri Swamiji.

### You Horse! Swallow This Child

The health of a male child of a village lady started deteriorating. She tried all types of remedies but there was no use. So finally she came to Akkalkot along with her child to get the kind favour of Sri Swamiji. When she came to Akkalkot she found her child dead. She started weeping very loudly and openly for her dead child. Sri Swamiji softened with compassion. He got up from his seat and came near the child. He lifted the child upside down and started whirling him.

A horse was standing nearby. He brought the child near the mouth of the horse and said "Horse, swallow this child". Then Sri Swamiji threw the body of the dead child in a nearby pit. No sooner the child fell into that pit, it became alive and started crying. The village lady went running to the child, embraced him with great affection, and then started feeding him with her breast milk. Tears of joy started flowing from her eyes. She repeatedly started singing in praise of Sri Swamiji and returned with the child.

### Feed Sesamum and Sugar

In *Kashi*[201] there was a famous scholar and astrologer named Bahireshastri. After worshipping Lord Dattatrey, he got a son. He named him 'Datta'. When they prepared his horoscope it showed his life span as only fourteen years. Both, husband and wife became very anxious. They apprised a saint about this matter in Benaras (Varanasi). He advised Bahireshastri to approach Sri Swami Samarth, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey in Akkalkot.

Bahireshastri along with his wife and son came to Akkalkot and started rendering service to Sri Swamiji. At that time, Sri Swamiji was sitting in Khasbaug. One day, Bahireshastri's son suddenly started shivering and fell down unconscious. Sri Swamiji asked Bahireshastri to bring Sesamum (an oilseed). Hearing the word 'sesamum', Shastriji became nervous and prostrated at the feet of Sri Swamiji and started crying. Sri Swamiji spoke "Oh! Why do you become nervous? Feed your son with sesamum and sugar". Bahireshastri put sesamum and sugar in his son's mouth and his son got up. Sri Swamiji snatched Bahireshastri's son from the jaws of death and returned him to his parents. After rendering service for few days, Shastri and his wife returned to Banaras with great joy.

### His Marriage Still To Be Carried Out

Cholappa, the devotee and attendant of Sri Swamiji, had two sons and one daughter. His daughter was named Rajoobai and the two sons as Krishnappa and Appa. When Rajoobai grew up she got married but within just a few days she died due to Tuberculosis. The sacred –thread ceremony of Krishnappa was performed but within fifteen days he died due Cholera. The family started mourning. By that time, Sri Swamiji arrived at the scene. He spoke "You fools, why do you cry? The marriage of Krishnappa is yet to be performed". Then Sri Swamiji went near Krishnappa and started saying "Oh! Neelkanth (Krishnappa) wake up. At least you speak two words with me". Hearing the words of Sri Swamiji there was some movement in the dead body and he woke up and sat. All the people present there were stunned and they started continuous shouts of victory in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, Krishnappa grew up and eventually got married.

### Who Is Giving Farewell To Him

Sri Swami Samarth had been to Manoor Village and then took a halt in the temple of Goddess Renuka. Severe disease *cholera* seriously affected this village. Everyday around 10 to 15 people were dying. At that time the kind-hearted Sri Swamiji was sitting in the Renuka-Temple. In the meantime, the *Patil* [202]of that village came there crying loudly and started praying unto Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, my son Hanumant is dying due to cholera disease. There is no surety about his survival. I pray you to kindly come and see my son". Sri Swamiji's heart softened with pity seeing the severe suffering of Patil. Therefore, Sri Swamiji went to his house and sat in the veranda of the

[201] Kashi: A holy place in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
[202] Patil: Head of a Village

house. Patil's son Hanumant was writhing in acute pain like a fish out of water. He was slowly and steadily getting suffocated.

There was loud lamentation going on in the house. Patil prostrated and tightly embraced the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and started crying loudly. At that time Cholappa too was standing nearby. He told Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, let us go to the temple. I am not able to bear this situation. It is not good to sit here". Sri Swamiji said "Oh! Who is bidding farewell to that boy Hanumant? You get Hanumant covered by the leaves of Neem tree and feed him juice from Neem leaves". No sooner this treatment was over, the boy started making body movements. He opened his eyes and started looking outside. He got up by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji. Next day Patil worshipped Sri Swamiji and offered *Naivedya* to him. From that day itself that village was totally rid of cholera disease.

### Laxman Koli - Anand Bharati

In Thane, Maharashtra, there was a boatman named Laxman Koli. There was a big storm and his ship started sinking in the sea. Laxman Koli was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji and he had come to Akkalkot 3 to 4 times. When the ship started tossing about, all the sailors became very nervous. Laxman Koli started calling upon Sri Swamiji for help "Akkalkot Nivasini Sri Swami Mai (Oh! My mother Sri Swamiji who is dwelling at Akkalkot), now please come here running. We are helpless. Our ship has started sinking".

When Laxman Koli was calling upon for help, here at Akkalkot Sri Swamiji suddenly stood up and lowered his right hand and then raised it. It appeared as though he had lifted a big load. Then he sat on his cot. At that time water started dripping down from his right hand. His disciples who were present there at the time tasted the dripping water and found it salty. They asked Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, your right hand was dripping salty water. Where did it come from? ". Sri Swamiji answered "Have I not lifted a drowning ship from the sea? ". None of the disciples could understand what is really meant. Here in the sea, the ship of Laxman Koli came up from the water as though somebody lifted it up using heavy force.

The sailors brought the ship to seashore. Laxman Koli realised that this miracle has taken place only due to the kind mercy of Sri Swamiji. Then he came with his family to Akkalkot. There he told the disciples and devotees as to how the serious calamity was averted in the sea. The disciples realised that Sri Swamiji's lifting action before and the time of the sinking ship occurred simultaneously. They started continuous shouts of victory in the praise of Sri Swamiji for this miraculous play.

**Laxman Koli was so much influenced by this miraculous incident that he abandoned everything in his life and devoted himself in the service of Sri Swamiji. Later on he became a fully accomplished person and came to be known as Anand-Bharati. His *Samadhi46* is located near the temple of Lord Dattatrey in Thane, Maharashtra**.

## The Mouse Became Alive

Sri Swamiji was kind hearted not only towards human beings but also animals. One day Sri Swamiji had been to the palace and was sitting on a swing. He was talking to the King. The temple priest was sitting in the *Devghar*[203] and rubbing sandalwood to prepare sandal-paste. Around this time he saw a mouse in the Devghar. In fact, mice had been a perpetual nuisance in the *devghar*. Seeing the mouse angered the priest and he threw the sandalwood towards the mouse. He hit the target and the mouse died.

The priest went out to throw away the dead mouse. When Sri Swamiji saw this, he said, "Bring that dead mouse here". Sri Swamiji caught the dead mouse by its tail, shook and moved it to and fro and spoke to the mouse "Now go away". The dead mouse became alive, started running and reached its burrow. People were amazed to witness this miracle of Sri Swamiji.

## Saved the Life of a Male Calf

In Akkalkot there was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji named Narasappa Sutar. He had a she-buffalo in his house. Every time when the she-buffalo gave birth to a calf, the newborn would not survive and the buffalo also would not give any milk. So having a she-buffalo in the house, did not serve any purpose at all. Once due to coincidence when the she-buffalo gave birth to a calf, Sri Swamiji too was present in the house. Sutar prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed "Maharaj, the she-buffalo would start giving milk only if you kindly save the new-born calf". Compassionate Sri Swamiji went near the she-buffalo. The newborn calf was writhing in pain and gasping for breath. Sri Swamiji moved his foot on the calf's body and immediately the calf became calm and normal. The calf's life was saved by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji and Sutar started getting milk from the she buffalo from then onwards.

This way, Sri Swami Samarth, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, saved a number of lives by his miraculous powers. Saints have truly said that nobody can destroy the one who is saved by God.

[203] Devghar: A sacred place where deities or idols are established and worshipped.

## Take Off the Veil of Illusion

**Man possesses limited life and power. Nevertheless, he gets infatuated with wealth and youth and ultimately he becomes arrogant. Then he behaves with misconduct. He also commits injustice, adultery, and outrage. These are but the various forms of illusion.**

**Since eyes are covered by illusion, man cannot see God. He does not recognize his Guru and gets involved in misdeeds. The Sadguru is fully capable to lift the veil of illusion from the eyes of his devotees and acquaint them with absolute truth**.

**For the devotees possessed by illusion, Sadguru tries to put them on the right path, sometimes by lifting them from difficulties, sometimes by granting them boons and sometimes by surprising them by his miraculous works. Sri Swami Samarth, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, during his incarnation period has uplifted numerous lives that had gone astray, by his miraculous works. One can dispel illusion by surrendering oneself on to the Sadguru**.

### Kirtankar Ramkrishna Buwa

There was a *Kirtankar*[204], named Ramkrishna Bua Mate. He had thoroughly studied *Vedanta*. On the basis of his study he had developed an inordinate sense of self-importance and he was always trying to humiliate other learned people. On the pretext of the narrating the Vedanta in the presence of Sri Swamiji, he started slandering Sri Swamiji. He started saying, "*Shankaracharya* was such a great teacher of Advaita Philosophy, but to win over people to his side, he performed duties in conformity with the (four) castes and (four) stages of life".

Sri Swamiji recognized the hypocrisy in Mate Buwa's speech. Sri Swamiji said, "At that time. Where were you? Is it life's objective to fill up one's treasury with money in the false name of religion and indecent conduct? ". Hearing these words of Sri Swamiji, Mate Buwa realized his fault and started repenting. When Mate Buwa sat down at the end of his 'Kirtan', he saw a virtuous learned man sitting near Sri Swamiji. The learned man reprimanded Mate Buwa sharply and said, "The Supreme Being, the eternal Swamiji has manifested himself in the form of Lord Dattatrey. All these Veda-*Vedanta* and all *Shastras* have originated from the Supreme Being. Therefore it is not graceful on your part to speak with arrogance, and with the diversity of sentiments in the presence of such a *Puran Purushottam*[205]".

Hearing these words from the learned man, Mate Buwa started regretting his remarks. He surrendered to Sri Swamiji and prayed for forgiveness.

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[204] Kirtankar: One who performs Kirtan. One who narrates a spiritual topic punctuated by music.
[205] Puran Puroshattam: Ancient and Eternal Supreme Being

For such false exhibition of one's learning, Sri Swamiji used to say, "Where are those genuine learned people? Those present now are all treacherous". Seeing the power of Sri Swamiji, pride of Mate Buwa was shattered and he started rendering service to Sri Swamiji. Every year he came to Akkalkot and offered his 'Kirtan' service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Once when he was narrating the 'Kirtan' he uttered "Who will deliver me from the bonds of this worldly ocean? ". Sri Swamiji was seated on a throne right in front of him. He lowered down his right foot on the ground and Mate Buwa prostrated himself down and embraced the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and said "These lotus feet are fully capable of delivering me from the bonds of this worldly ocean". When his pride was totally destroyed, Sri Swamiji showered his kind grace on Mate Buwa.

## An Alchemist Ascetic

There was an ascetic who had acquired knowledge of *alchemy*[206]. On the basis of this knowledge, he enjoyed an easy life filled with pleasures. He was very arrogant. He had his own team of about 25-30 disciples and attendants. He would never go out to collect alms. Sweet and delicious dishes were being cooked on a daily basis. He was so arrogant that he would utter loathsome abuses and beat people up in anger.

Vamanbua Badodekar, who was absorbed in the contemplation of Brahma, had gone to Nasik. He had gone to the abode of Saint Gholap Swamy. Saint Gholap Swamy told Vamanbua, that there is an alchemist ascetic, but he has neither prudence nor asceticism. Vamanbua along with his associates went to the alchemist ascetic. The ascetic started boasting in the presence of Vamanbua and his companions "Everyday, I prepare 3 to 4 *tolas*[207] of gold from plants. I also prepare gold in a *chillim*[208]. The ascetics Gorakh-Machhindra had also acquired this secret knowledge. The incarnation of Lord Dattatrey is also meant to acquire this knowledge of alchemy. One who has the favour of God's kind mercy should never beg for alms".

He asked Vamanbua, the name of his Guru. Vamanbua said, "Sri Swami Samarth of Akkalkot is my Guru". The associates of Vamanbua started continuous shouts in praise of Sri Swami Samarth. The alchemist ascetic who was obsessed by arrogance started uttering abuses and asked "Can your Guru, Sri Swami Samarth create gold? ". Vamanbua replied, "If you can acquire the knowledge of alchemy by the kind favour of our Sadguru Sri Swami Samarth, then you will see gold everywhere. At least, once go to Akkalkot and experience this miracle". The alchemist ascetic started growling with arrogance and said, "There is no necessity for me to go anywhere. If I witness this miracle here only then will I believe your words". Vamanbua came and narrated Gholap Swamy about this incident. Then Gholap Swamy announced, "Sri Swami Samarth will certainly teach him a lesson".

Next day, when Vamanbua and his associates went to Gholap Swamy they came to know that since that morning the alchemist ascetic was trying to create gold but the

[206] Alchemy: The art of transforming base metal into Gold
[207] Tola: Measure of weight generally used for precious metals. 10 Gm is 1 Tola.
[208] Chillim: A small smoking pipe

only thing that came out of his process was charcoal instead of Gold. They also came to know that the alchemist ascetic has felt very offended and intends to kill all the associates of Akkalkot who had come to visit him.

With this knowing Vamanbua and Gholap Swamy along with their associates started continuous shouts of victory in praise of Sri Swami Samarth and went out to visit the hypocritical alchemist ascetic. When the ascetic saw Vamanbua, Gholap Swamy and associates coming near him, he started uttering dirty abuses and throwing stones at them. It was almost certain that somebody would die. Vamanbua, Gholap Swamy, and their associates stood there and started chanting the name of Sri Swami Samarth continuously. The ascetic came near to hit them. However, the stone which he had lifted to throw and hit these people, fell on his head itself and he fell down unconscious.

When the ascetic regained consciousness, he went on uttering "Akkalkot Swamiji is a gentleman and a genuine man. Till I get his 'Darshan', I will not accept any food. Simply just by hearing the name and fame of Sri Swamiji, if a highly intoxicated person like me asks for repentance then would anything not happen by the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji? ". Next day the ascetic along with his attendants went to Akkalkot. When he reached there, Sri Swamiji was sitting in Khasbaug and playing with himself. The ascetic offered fruits to Sri Swamiji and prostrated before him. Sri Swamiji got up and started thundering "Hit a stone on my head. Have you not become neglectful of others in arrogance? You mean fellow, what are you looking for? You have become like a coal. Now die!. How would you judge an ascetic? Now hit that stone on your head itself. Open your eyes and look on your left side for the miracle of alchemy, "

So saying, Sri Swamiji started laughing uncontrollably. The alchemist ascetic started perspiring with shame. When he saw the tree on his left side, water was trickling down from the tree. Wherever the water trickled down, that place was shining like gold. Seeing this miracle, he got very frightened and started trembling. All his sense organs started becoming inert and he could get the realization of his inner soul, which is quite different from his physical body.

While praising Sri Swamiji, he started saying "There is greatness in the glory of this 'Darshan'. It is really a blessing. Sri Swamiji is really a true Sadguru by whose Darshan, touch, and mercy, one gets realization of the inner soul. He is God. He is the inner spirit of everyone. He is the sole observer and the imperishable. I am really blessed to get 'Darshan' of such a Sadguru. The knowledge of alchemy, witchcraft, ignorance, and illusion are all senseless and full of pain. The supersoul in the heart can be identified with the Supreme Being, the Universe, and the Divine Essence. It represents eternal happiness. It is fully liberated, pure and beyond the reach of senses. Oh! Maharaj, you are only the *Swami Dattaguru*[209]. You are the Lord, the Omnipotent, and the Kind-hearted. I am fully satisfied. Oh! Swami Dattaguru, What are your orders for this servant? ".

Swami Dattaguru spoke to him "Now go from here to our Mahurgad and pass your time silently there". Then Sri Swamiji gave him red-ochre coloured cloth and

[209] Swami Dattaguru: Lord Dattatrey

deerskin as *Prasad*. After rendering service for few days the ascetic took the blessings of Sri Swamiji and went to Mahurgad. Sri Swamiji manifested himself at Mahurgad and gave 'Darshan' to the ascetic. The ascetic prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and washed the feet with his tears of joy. His life was changed. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, the ascetic attained everlasting happiness.

The ascetic himself informed this complete statement, in writing, to the *Brahmanishta*[210], Vamanbua.

**Vishnubua Brahmachari**

Maloji Raje, the King of the then State of Akkalkot, was a religious person. He would arrange for discourses on *Vedanta*. He was very fond of studying philosophical and religious books. He would invite learned people with due respect. In Mumbai there was a person named Vishnubua *Brahmachari*. He had defeated Christian priests in debates. The Rajesaheb wanted to know about Vedanta from the Brahmachari. So he called the Brahmachari, who came to the palace and delivered a lecture on Vedanta.

One day, the Brahmachari went for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. In the presence of Sri Swamiji he started exhibiting his theoretical knowledge and then gave a long narration of *Vedanta*. At the end, he put a question to Sri Swamiji "How do you accomplish the stage of *Brahmatadakarata* [211]? ". Sri Swamiji did not say anything. So Brahmachari thought, "Sri Swamiji is crazy. He does not know anything. Still people have unduly exalted Sri Swamiji. I am really a learned man. How could Sri Swamiji understand whatever I have spoken about Vedanta? ".

At night Brahmachari got a dream that thousands of scorpions have fallen on his body and one of the scorpions bit him. He got terrified and woke up screaming loudly in his dream. Nearby, there was a Parsi gentleman who woke him up from his deep sleep. When he woke up he was seized with fear and started thinking "whether it is true or not, I have condemned Sri Swamiji. Is this dream not the result of my condemnation? ".

In the morning he came for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Again he narrated Vedanta in the presence of Sri Swamiji and put a question to Sri Swamiji "What is *Brahmatadakarata*? And what is the required means to accomplish it? ". Sri Swamiji spoke "You stupid fellow, in your dream thousands of scorpions fell on your body. Out of them, when one scorpion bit you, you started screaming in the dream as you could not bear the pain and you are making a big show by talking about Vedanta? Do you think you would become a Yogi by making childish and hair-splitting narration about Vedanta? Get up and leave this place". Brahmachari pulled a long face and returned to his place. He realized that Sri Swamiji is not crazy but a superhuman who can make others crazy.

[210] Brahmanistha: The one who is constantly absorbed in the cotemplation of Brahma
[211] Brahmatadakarata: Get absorption into the Supreme Being

### Three Ascetics

Once, three ascetics belonging to Giri, Puri and Bharati sects, came to Akkalkot. After hearing the name of Sri Swamiji, they started asking, "Who is this Swamiji? From where did he come from? What is the spiritual stage of this Swamiji? Is he a *Hans*[212], or a *Param Hans*[213]? Even after being an ascetic he is seen either lying on a bed or rolling on a bed and pillow. Where is the punishment for him? Which scriptures represent and justify his path of behaviour? ". Seeing the arrogance of these ascetics the people present there said, "You should personally meet Sri Swamiji and then get your doubts clarified".

When those three ascetics went in front of Sri Swamiji, their tongue became very heavy and their speech was arrested. They were unable to talk in spite of their frantic efforts. They all got confounded. They could not bear the sight of Sri Swamiji's Divine splendour. Repenting themselves, they prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji got softened with pity. Sri Swamiji put some holy ash on their tongues and the speech was restored.

Then they started singing in the praise of Sri Swamiji and started saying "Sri Swamiji, your miraculous works are even incomprehensible for the *Vedas*. Now we pray to you to kindly guide us as to which path should we follow for our welfare? How could we get liberated from the illusion and attain divine favours?". Sri Swamiji spoke to them with open-heart "Keep full faith in the words of saints. Seek their shelter, sacrifice your ego and devote your time for singing, worshiping and continuous repetition of God's name. Be happy with whatever you get. Do not harass any animal physically, mentally, or by speech. Maintain your cordial relations with me. Remember that God is the doer and he gets things done as well. Take shelter of devotion. When your worship to God gets accomplished, you will be fully satisfied.

Thus the pride of those three ascetics was totally destroyed. They remained in Akkalkot rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji till their end.

### Ramacharya

Once, when Sri Swami Samarth was in Khedmanoor Village, he put himself up in the temple of Goddess Yellamma. The headman of that village, Appasaheb Patil, was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. He performed *Shodshopchar* worship of Sri Swamiji and gave the water by which he had washed the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji to his family members. There was a learned man of Vaishnav190 sect named Ramacharya in this village as well. Seeing the honour offered to Sri Swamiji by Appasaheb Patil, Ramacharya started fretting and fuming with jealousy.

He started making critical remarks about Sri Swamiji. He would say "This ascetic is totally corrupted. He has no caste, no kith and kin nor any family. He sits

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[212] Hans: One of the fourteen kinds of ascetics of high order.
[213] Param Hans: An ascetic of the highest order

wherever he likes and our headman Appasaheb Patil takes that water used in washing the feet of that ascetic Sri Swamiji". Seetaramacharya advised Ramacharya "It is not good to talk anything about anybody without any prior investigation. So let us carry on some tests of Sri Swamiji". Both these Vaishnav Brahmins decided that they will keep in mind the first half verses each from Rigveda, Bhagwadgita and Bhagwat along with their meaning and if Swami Maharaj tells us the second half of each verse along its meaning, then we will consider Sri Swamiji as incarnation of Lord Dattatrey.

Next morning Sri Swamiji got up. He had not even touched the *Hukka*[214]. By then, those Vaishnav Brahmins came over to test Sri Swamiji. Since they had come test Sri Swamiji, then how would they offer their salutations to him?. So without even offering their salutations, they started to test Sri Swamiji. However, to their disbelief, whatever verses came up in the minds of those Brahmins, Sri Swamiji started singing the same in a sweet and melodious tone. Hearing this, the Brahmins felt ashamed and prayed to Sri Swamiji to forgive their serious offence. Then they started singing in praise of Sri Swamiji and became his devotees.

## Shankaracharya

Once, *Shankaracharya* of Sankeshwar Muth, who had undertaken a pilgrimage, came to Akkalkot. Maloji Raje, the King of the then State of Akkalkot, received him with due honour and made good arrangement for his stay. Then the king performed 'Shodshopchar' worship of Shankaracharya. The king offered food to all Brahmins who were present there. By that time, Sri Swamiji also arrived there to see the festival. A Brahmin prayed him to be seated in the row meant for Brahmins to take food. However, the other Brahmins who were sitting in that row started whispering amongst themselves, "This ascetic takes food anywhere. So arrange to serve him food separately and not in our row".

All the Brahmins sitting there were inspired by this evil thought and suddenly there was a miracle. Worms were seen writhing in the plates filled with sumptuous food. The Brahmins sitting in the row were horrified to see those worms. The old Brahmin, who had offered a seat to Sri Swamiji in that row, said, "Lord Dattatrey himself has been insulted. Hence this has happened". Then the *Jagadguru21 Shankaracharya123* realised his grave mistake. He offered his prayers to Sri Swamiji and said "Kindly forgive me for this serious offence. In fact you are the real Jagadguru. Because of the false arrogance due to authoritative power, I have committed a serious offence. Kindly show mercy on me and accept this seat reserved for me".

Sri Swamiji started uttering abuses and said, "I am a corrupted ascetic and those three *Shastries*[215] who are sitting in the row along with you, have been born by Muslim youth. Ask these Shastries and their mothers. You are the great teacher of advaita philosophy and preceptor of the people. Then how did you allow those three Muslim-born Shastries in this row meant for Brahmins?. By shaving head, beard, and

[214] Hukka: A smoking pipe. Generally bigger than Chillim. See Footnote for Chillim.
[215] Shastries: One who has studied the Hindu scriptures Shastras. Also see Footnote for Shastras.

moustache do you think that a person becomes an ascetic? Please tell me, a person who studies the 'scriptural sciences' becomes corrupted or not? ".

After listening to those words of Sri Swamiji, all those Shastri Brahmins lowered their heads in shame. They prostrated at the lotus feet of Shri Swamiji and prayed for forgiveness. Kind-hearted Sri Swamiji forgave them. By this incident, Shankaracharya realised the supreme power of Sri Swamiji.

### Keep your Greatness in Your Own House

King Maloji Raje of the then State of Akkalkot was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. Every Thursday the king would go for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Once he went for the 'Darshan' riding on an elephant. After seeing Sri Swamiji, he got down from the elephant, went ahead bare-footed and prostrated with his head resting on the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. However, the King received a powerful slap from Sri Swamiji, and his turban fell down. The King got terribly scared. With anger, Sri Swamiji started yelling at him "Keep your greatness in your own house. What is the necessity of that greatness here? I make many kings like you out of this game of chess". The King realised his serious mistake. From that day onwards, whenever he would go for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', he would leave his horse and elephant far away from the view of Sri Swamiji and then walk barefooted.

### Narayan Bhat

In Solapur, there was a Brahmin named Narayan Bhat. Occasionally under the pretext of taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', he would come to Akkalkot but he had no faith towards Sri Swamiji. Passing critical remarks against Sri Swamiji in the presence of people, he would say, "Who is this Swami? He eats anywhere and he sleeps anywhere. He doesn't do any work. He does not follow any rules about untouchability. What type of ascetic is he? ".

Once he went to Akkalkot. He went with others to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' and stood there watching as if watching some fun. Observing his bad intentions, Sri Swamiji said, "Go away screaming from here". Without bothering for those words of Sri Swamiji, he returned home in an arrogant manner. After coming home, he learnt that there was theft in his house worth three to four thousand rupees (a huge amount during those days). He was shocked and he started thrashing his head. He repented very much. Finally he gave up his ego and engaged himself in the devotion of Sri Swamiji.

### City Of Injustice

Dajeeba Bhosle was a trusted prime minister of the King of Akkalkot, Maloji Raje. He was very unjust and tyrannical. Because of his bad conduct he was driven out from the state by the then British Government. However, King Maloji Raje tried his best

and stood bail for Dajeeba Bhosle and got him released. Sri Swamiji was very displeased with Maloji Raje, for getting him released and standing bail to a person like Dajeeba, who would always harass poor people. Due to this incident Sri Swamiji with a seemingly angry and red face was speaking with Narsimharao Bhosle in an angered tone "What type of mischief is this? Who has brought this cunning thief from custody? He has been released but again he will get arrested and taken away". The King Maloji Raje got this message. Nevertheless, there was no adverse effect on him since he did not bother much about Sri Swamiji's words.

After the return of Dajeeba in the state, injustice, and harassment started all over again. Dajeeba and his companions like Magistrate Barjoji Manikji and Srinivas Subedar started harassing people. Injustice spread in the city on a large scale. Severe punishment was being given for minor offences. People were openly disgraced in a disrespectful manner. Tax was increased. People complained to the British Government's agent. There was a rumour that the state is getting dissolved. However, the King and his coterie of people did not pay attention to this rumour.

Once, Sri Swamiji was sitting on a low square seat of the palace. Magistrate Barjoji riding on a horse was entering the palace and Sri Swamiji yelled at him "If you come ahead, I will break your head. Vagabond. Thief. You burnt my children. You set them on fire? ". When Barjoji out of fear, started backtracking, Sri Swamiji uttered a word "*Dissolved*". There was a miracle! Within just a few days the then Akkalkot State, was *dissolved* by the British Government. Dajeeba was arrested. Barjoji and Subhedar Srinivas fled to the then Hyderbad State and a lawsuit was instituted against King Maloji Raje. Thus the arrogance of everyone was shattered.

## One Should Not Imitate Anyone's Style

Gopalbua Kelkar was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. He built a *Muth* in Chiplun and installed the *Padukas* of Sri Swamiji. One day a saint came to the Muth. Gopalbua asked the saint "Maharaj, which place do you belong? From where did you come now? ". The saint said, "What do I know? ". Gopalbua was very impressed hearing those words and he started imitating his style.

Gopalbua had gone to a village to collect alms. Someone asked him there "Bua, where do you come from? ". Gopalrao replied, "What do I know? ". The inner-spirited Sri Swamiji read Gopalbua's mind.

After a few days Gopalbua went to Akkalkot. When he took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', he asked Gopalbua "Which place do you come from? ". Gopalrao replied, "I am from Chiplun". Again there was a question "well! Where is Chiplun? ". Reply given "It is in Konkan". Again there was a question "Where is Konkan? ". Reply given "It is below the Ghat (Hill)".

Sri Swamiji again questioned him "Where is the ghat? ". Now there was a flash of lightening in Gopalbua's mind, he understood that Sri Swamiji is putting these questions under the pretext of testing him. The blind imitation of the saint was costing him dear in the presence of Sri Swamiji. Then Gopalbua spoke "Maharaj, I do not know about Konkan". Sri Swamiji started laughing very loudly. Gopalbua got very much ashamed and started repenting.

## Kotikoop

Similar incident took place even in a holy place like Rameshwar. There, the temple priest was collecting tax from people for taking bath in the holy water of *Kotikoop*[216]. When Sri Swamiji went there to take bath, the temple priests stopped him. Then Sri Swamiji performed a miracle. Worms started appearing, writhing with pain, in the Kotikoop. Foul stench started coming from the water. People stopped going to the Kotikoop. As a result, the daily income of those temple priests stopped completely. Greediness and egoism is always followed by repentance. They all repented and prayed for Sri Swamiji's forgiveness. Only then the holy water of Kotikoop got automatically purified.

## Traditional Hypocrisy

Outside Akkalkot, there is a small temple of Sri Rama. In this temple, a gentleman Baba Sabnis would hold daily discussions on Vedanta. Sri Swamiji would also come and take a seat. Kashinath Mhaswade and Baba Phadnis, both *Warkaris*[217] also came for the discussions. However, those warkari people did not have any implicit faith towards Sri Swamiji.

One day Kashinath Mhaswade said, "Sri Swamiji has become crazy. People are becoming crazy after Sri Swamiji in vain. He has fallen from grace after becoming an ascetic. By the influence of Sri Swamiji, our Baba Sabnis is also reshuffling loose sheets of those religious books on Vedanta". During the same time, a serpent bit one person sitting in that temple. Everyone became nervous. Kashinath Mhaswade brought the snake-bitten person to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji spoke "Even if I am crazy and fallen from grace, what does your father loose? You get readymade food to eat. Hence you get time to make fun of somebody. Is it not? I know all your hypocrisy, your rites and customs like applying an auspicious mark on the forehead, putting a garland on one's neck, observing pollution caused by contact with the untouchables, are all humbug".

The concerned people started perspiring with shame hearing Sri Swamiji's blunt speech. They all prayed for his forgiveness. By the kind of mercy of Sri Swamiji, the person who was bitten by snake became perfectly well.

[216] Kotikoop: Water tank
[217] Warkaris: Pilgrim-devotees of Lord Vithoba, Pandharpur

### Deception By The Milkman

The festival of *Gurupratipada*[218] was being celebrated in the Muth of Sri Swami Samarth of Akkalkot. Arrangements were made to feed Brahmins with sumptuous meals. For the festival, milkman Malloo sold milk at twice the price, still it was found that water was added to the milk. After boiling the milk, it got completely spoilt. How can this word remain hidden from Sri Swamiji? Milkman Malloo had fifteen-twenty she-buffaloes. There was a miracle. Those she-buffaloes did not allow Malloo at all to milk them. Instead of milk, blood started oozing out from the udders of the buffaloes. The milkman became terrified seeing the blood. He tried all remedial treatments but in vain.

He became very frustrated and started repenting. He went weeping to Sri Swamiji, Prayed for forgiveness and swore that he would never cheat in the future. Kind-hearted Sri Swamiji forgave the milkman with kind mercy and then his she-buffaloes started giving milk. Forgetting his ego, the milkman started rendering service by providing one *seer* of milk to the Muth daily for the 'Prasad'.

### Repentance Itself Is Atonement

Sri Swamiji had come to Solapur from Akkalkot. There, lakhs of people started pouring in to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. There was a merchant by name Chanbasappa. Seeing the pomp and prosperity of Sri Swamiji, he spoke to another merchant, Siddhappa Karanje, "Today, merchants, shopkeepers, children, women and men of Solapur have all gone to take 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji of Akkalkot. They are all foolish. Forgetting God *Siddheshwar*[219] of Solapur, people have gone crazy after an ascetic, Sri Swamiji".

Siddappa was a devotee. He spoke "Why should we commit sin by censuring God, Guru and the saints? Let us go and witness the Divine Power of Sri Swamiji". Therefore, Chanbasappa and Siddappa both went for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. There was a miracle. Chanbasappa witnessed Goddess Parvati along with God Siddheshwar Kailasnath seated in the place of Sri Swamiji himself and glaring with splendour. He became nervous, started trembling with fear and prayed for the kind forgiveness. **Then Sri Swamiji advised, "You have already repented. Repentance itself is atonement. Sin gets washed away and the mind gets purified".** The kind-hearted Sri Swamiji put down his pride and gave him a sense of oneness.

### Brahmin Paid Heavily For His Ego

A woman Shivubai, from the then Hyderabad State, along with her son, had come to Akkalkot to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Her son had become blind, after the *thread* ceremony. She prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed for the

[218] Gurupratipada: Worship of preceptor on the first day of lunar fortnight
[219] Siddheshwar: Another name of Lord Shiva.

restoration of eyesight of her son. Sri Swamiji said, "Five giants are coming to test me. At that time, your son will get his eyesight restored".

In the meantime, five stout Vaishnav Brahmins, puffed with pride, came there to test Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji spoke to Shivubai's kid "Ganesh, come here, just speak out sentence by sentence stored in these Brahmin's mind along with the correct answer". Sri Swamiji took out his garland and gave it to Ganesh to wear it. He then moved a marigold flower on both eyes of Ganesh. Instantly the boy started talking as his eyesight was restored. He refuted all the doubts stored in the minds of those Brahmins.

All the Vaishnav Brahmins became ashamed and prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji then spoke to their religious instructor, "Because I eat food given by anybody, you slandered me and tried to test me. But your mother committed adultery with several Muslims. You were born to a Muslim father by name Imambaksh". Hearing these words the religious instructor Brahmin was embarrassed. He repented and prayed to Sri Swamiji for cleansing his sin. Kind-hearted Sri Swamiji became merciful towards him and said "Now go and take bath in the river Ganga (Ganges) and follow *Bhagwat Dharma*[220]".

The pride emanating from wealth, youth and knowledge always brings an impediment in the path of religious and spiritual progress. Therefore a Guru always destroys the pride of his devotee. When the human body itself is unreal, then what is the use of that pride? The well known saint Meerabai has said-

"Dhana-Jobanaka Garab na keejai !
Jhootha Panchranga Chola re!"

[220] Bhagwat Dharma: A system of divine faith and worship

## Improper Behaviour

Having being caught in the web of Maya[221], a living being commits acts of adultery, malpractice, tyranny, and wickedness. Puffed up with one's strength, authority, and power, a living being commits malpractice, just by closing his eyes like a cat, but the all powerful God comes to know everything. Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj severely condemned such double-faced persons and also meted out punishment to shatter their ego.

### Pollution in Sohoni's House

Sri Swamiji went to Pandharpur from Mangalvedha and then came to Mohol. There he took a halt in the house of the Mamlatdar, Ganesh Hari Sohoni. It was the day of *Ganeshotsav*[222]. On that day, *Kirtan* was being held in Sohoni's house. It was midnight and raining outside. In such a situation, Sri Swamiji went out of the house. Even after constant earnest requests, Sri Swamiji did not go inside the house. Sri Swamiji told Sohoni "I am experiencing air pollution inside your house. So I will not enter your house". So saying Sri Swamiji went away in the forest.

Sohoni was a devotee but still he was caught in a web of strong sexual desires. He had kept a concubine, in the house. So Sri Swamiji did not stay in the house. Sohoni was not ready to give up his sexual desire. His ill fame had spread everywhere. The collector of Solapur had come to Mohol for investigation. He tried to convince Sohoni in private, "Try to give up your mistress. It is not graceful on part of an officer". However, Sohoni replied, "This is my personal affair. There is no necessity for you to interfere in my personal affairs". The collector became very angry. Later on criminal suits were filed against Sohoni. As a result, he lost his job. Ultimately he gave up his mistress. Only after that Sri Swamiji showered his kind mercy on him and he was acquitted. Later on, he got a job in the then state of Baroda.

### An Adulteress Exposed

Sri Swamiji always severely condemned adultery. Once, a woman from a rich family came for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Relatives and servants accompanied her. When she offered prayers for the favour of getting a son, Sri Swamiji roared at her and said "You unchaste woman, why do you pray me for the favour of a son? Look there, your lover is sitting. He will give you a son". Since she was exposed in the presence of all the people, she concealed her face and ran away from there.

[221] Maya: Illusion. Maya must be seen through in order to achieve moksha (liberation of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth) - ahamkar (ego-consciousness) and karma are seen as part of the binding forces of Maya.
[222] Ganesh Utsav: Festival held in the month of Bhadrapad as per Hindu calendar, month of August /September as per English calendar, in the honour of the deity, Lord Ganesh, the son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati

### The Caste of a Bad Character Woman

A gentleman named Karve from Pune had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After the first few days, trying to act smart, he asked Sri Swamiji about his caste. Sri Swamiji instantly replied "I am a *Yajurvedi Brahmin*[223]. My name is Nrushimhabhan. I belong to the Kashyap *Gotra*, and my Zodiac sign is *Meen (Pisces)*. If you ask me again, you will get shoe beating. Karve, what is the caste of that coquettish girlfriend of yours, who flirts and gives bed-company to everybody? ".

Hearing these words, Karve prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji out of repentance and prayed, "You are the Supreme being. What shall I do now? Instead of earning such a bad name, it would be better if I die". Then he started crying. Sri Swamiji said, "Why do you cry? Go and celebrate Holy festival". After a few days the girl of ill repute died in a holy fire. Thus Karve was liberated from the source of agony.

### Illicit Relationship With Own Brother

A gentleman from Pune along with his wife and brother-in-law had come to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. He had no children. His wife offered a *Chaturdashguni tambul*[224] to Sri Swamiji and prayed for a son. Sri Swamiji flew into rage and said "You unchaste woman, you have maintained illicit relationship with your own brother for the last seven years. Instead of feeding this roll of betal leaf to your own brother, why do you give it to me? ". Hearing those harsh words both, the sister and brother, were astonished and hiding their faces ran away from the scene. The bad character of that woman shocked everyone present there.

### A Stage-Player Lover

A Brahmin woman named Janakibai had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. She strictly practiced untouchability. She prepared *naivedya* food and when she went to offer the same to Sri Swamiji. He said, "I do not eat uncontaminated pure food. Feed this to your stage-player". She was exposed and she became very nervous and stood greatly embarrassed. When she prayed with full praises only then Sri Swamiji accepted a little of the food offered by her as 'Naivedya' and said, "In future when you get white spots on your body, there will be awakening of devotion". After a few days, Janakibai started suffering from white Leprosy and she became engrossed in devotion.

### What Type of Progress Is This

Two progress-oriented persons along with their wives had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Seeing these people, Sri Swamiji flew in rage "What type of fellows are you? You mutually exchange your wives and get illicit enjoyment. You rascals, do you want

[223] Yajurvedi Brahmin: A Brahmin who observes the rites and ceremonies as prescribed in the Yajurveda, the second of the four Vedas- Hindu scriptures. Also see Footnote for *Vedas*.
[224] Chaturdashguni tambul: A roll of betal leaf with fourteen ingredients like lime, betalnut etc

to go to hell by committing this sin? ". When Sri Swamiji exposed their secret, those two people got so much ashamed and embarrassed that they fled the scene.

### The Sayings of a Saint

Once, a saint of Kabir-Sect came to Akkalkot. Early in the morning he would go out with an Indian lute in his hand, wearing garland and adoring the auspicious mark on his forehead, singing songs. One day Sri Swamiji was sitting on the porch of someone's house. At that time the saint was passing by singing with full gestures quoting "This is the sayings of a saint. This is the saying of a saint". Hearing these words, Sri Swamiji rolled and tossed about laughing. He then started mocking the saint by showing the action of conjugal union by hand and started singing in the same tone "This is the sayings of a saint". The disciples and devotees sitting there also started laughing. By the gesture of Sri Swamiji, the disciples-devotees understood that the saint is a hypocrite. They followed the saint and reached the place where he had put up. There they found a coquettish woman, busy in the service of that saint.

In fact, this so-called saint had enticed a married woman and brought her in his service. Such a saint was moving round singing and advising people to follow the sayings of a saint. Once fully exposed, the so-called saint ran away from Akkalkot.

### Radha's Breasts Got Dissolved

There was a beautiful prostitute named Radha. She came for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After looking at the lustrous body of Sri Swamiji, Radha had a doubt in her mind as to whether Sri Swamiji had, at any time, enjoyed the companionship of a woman or not. Knowing her thoughts, Sri Swamiji asked her "What is the difference between a man and a woman? ". Radha replied, "Maharaj, woman's body is constituted by separate parts like breasts than the body of a man". Sri Swamiji immediately spoke to her "Give your breasts to the Brahmin. Why are you sitting here looking at me? ". Hearing this, she went away. Within a few days her breasts started slowly dissolving and her chest became very plain like a man. She greatly repented. She then earned merit by performing charitable acts and finally went to Benaras and lived there till the end.

### Vamanrao Gholap

In Pune there was an engineer by name Wamanrao Gholap. He earned lots of money by corruption. With money power he started committing adultery. One day he had been to commit adultery with a lady but they were caught red-handed by her husband who registered a criminal case against him. He lost his sleep. He surrendered himself to Sri Swamiji and started praying, "Akkalkotniwasi Mother, kindly get me released. You protect me from this calamity. Henceforth I shall not commit any such evil act like adultery. Kindly shower your mercy and save me". Out of repentance, when he gave up all his evil acts and surrendered, the kind-hearted Sri Swamiji showered mercy on Wamanrao and got him acquitted. Then Wamanrao gave up his regular

employment and came to Akkalkot to render devotional service to Sri Swamiji. However, before his arrival itself, Sri Swamiji had taken *Mahasamadhi*. Even after taking *Mahasamadhi*, Sri Swamiji had manifested himself and saved Gholap. Everybody was amazed by this miraculous work of Sri Swamiji.

## Outward Show

Sri Swamiji was the uncommon and rare Yogi. He had great hatred for superficial show. In his miraculous works he has negated superficial show, which a so-called spiritual person may resort to.

### Chandra-Swar (Breathing air out of the left nostril)

Vamanbua Vamorikar, Alais Badodekar, was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. On his way to Akkalkot, he got down at Kadal station and took a Tonga[225] for his onward journey to Akkalkot. At that time it came to his notice that he is breathing out *Surya-Swar*[226]. He felt that for the purpose of Guru-Darshan as per *Swar-Shastra*[227], the *Chandra-swar*[228] is considered more beneficial. Therefore, he tried changing the *Surya-Swar* to *Chandra–Swar* through *Pranayam*. When he failed in his attempt, he skilfully put a ball of cotton in the right nostril to force *Chandra-Swar*. Thus he started breathing through his left nostril.

Having being freed from this anxiety by forcing breathing through *Chandra-Swar*, he went and stood before Sri Swamiji. The all-knowing Sri Swamiji knew this. Sri Swamiji pressed his right nostril and mocked Vamanbua saying, "Why is it that the *Chandra-Swar* does not out from my left nostril for Guru-Darshan? ". He told Wamanbua "Take out that ball of cotton from your nostril. What happens by stopping the breathing of air from one nostril?. Even if the flow of air stops from the nostril, there would be a flow of air from the mouth as well as below the mouth. So stop this farce".

Wamanbua was embarrassed and ashamed. He removed the ball of cotton from his right nostril and threw it away. He said "The Sadguru, who is free from all troubles, passionless and one with Supreme Bliss and merged into the Divine Self, is Omnipresent. Without realising this fact I stuffed the nostril with the ball of suspicion. By the kind mercy of my Sadguru, I have removed that ball of suspicion and threw it away. Now I am free from suspicion". Sri Swamiji said "The state of Supreme Bliss does not include the presence of Sun, Moon etc.

### Untouchability

Sri Swamiji had a great hatred for the superficial show of untouchability. He would visit anyplace, sit anywhere, and eat food given by anyone irrespective of the person's status in society, caste, or religion. He had a feeling of equality towards all in his heart. Some people, compelled by their habits, make an outward show of untouchability in front of Sri Swamiji. Once Janakibai from Baroda had prepared

[225] Tonga: Horse carriage. Traditionally used for transportating people over long distances.
[226] Surya-Swar: Breathing out air out of the right nostril.
[227] Swar Shastra: The treatise which interprets the indications and premonitions of the air as it proceeds through the nostrils
[228] Chandra Swar: Breathing air out of left nostril.

unpolluted holy food for 'naivedya' and offered the same to Sri Swamiji, but Sri Swamiji refused to accept the food and said, "I do not eat unpolluted holy food".

### Tol Repented

When Sri Swamiji had come to Solapur, Chintopant Tol took him to his house. However, a doubt cropped up in his mind. He began to think, "Sri Swamiji takes food anywhere he likes, so it is not proper to serve him food in the same row as ours. We will serve him food in a separate place". Reading Tol's mental thought, Sri Swamiji said, "There is a doubt in your mind. So I shall not take food here". Tol repented for his grave mistake, prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji, and prayed for forgiveness. Only then kind-hearted Sri Swamiji took food with Tol.

### Uncontaminated Food

When Sri Swamiji came to Akkalkot, initially he stayed in Cholappa's house. There he harassed the family members of Cholappa. Cholappa's wife observed untouchability, but Sri Swamiji never supported untouchability. He would accept the unpolluted food served by Cholappa's wife. However, sometimes he would get stark naked and say "Now I will serve food to all of you in a holy condition". Hearing these words from Sri Swamiji Cholappa's family would get ashamed.

### Outward Show Of Untouchability

While staying in Akkalkot, Gopalbua Kelkar of Chiplun in Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, went to a well to take a bath. There he requested the Brahmins to give him a vessel to take bath. They refused. Finally, he took a vessel from a person who belonged to the Maratha[229] community and took his bath. At that time Balawantrao was also present there. Balwantrao used to help Sri Swamiji while smoking a *hukka*. He started mocking Gopalbua saying, "Oh! This *Kokanya*[230] has become corrupted. Do not take water polluted by him". Gopalbua heard these remarks and was deeply hurt. At the same time, someone present there commented, "Give him the *Charanodaka*[231] and purify him".

They gave holy water to Gopalbua. However, the problem did not end there. The same day during dinner someone remarked "Do not keep the leaf-plate (used to serve food) of that corrupted Kokanya in the same rank (row) as ours, but keep separately". Sripad Bhat gave moral support to Gopalbua and said that taking *Charanodaka* has already purified him. However, people present there displayed high-handedness and forced Gopalbua to sit in a separate place. Gopalbua Kelkar was dejected and felt miserable. He was in tears while eating.

[229] Maratha: Non-Brahmin. Warrior community
[230] Kokanya: In this context: A person living in Konkan, Maharashtra.
[231] Charanodaka: The holy water which washed the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji

In the normal row for all the Brahmins, a leaf-plate readied for Sri Swamiji, but Sri Swamiji started uttering abuses and said, "I have become corrupted. Do not touch me. I shall not take food". He became very angry, went out of that place, and sat on a large heap of garbage. In this way Sri Swamiji displayed strong opposition to observing untouchability and to the injustice meted out towards Gopalbua Kelkar.

That day Sri Swamiji did not take any food. Next day those people allowed Gopalbua to take food along with others in the same row, only then Sri Swamiji cooled down. The particular person, who had prevented Gopalbua Kelkar from taking food in the same row as that of others, lost his mental balance due to misfortune.

### Earthen Worship

A Brahmin was carrying out earthen idol worship. Even while sitting in front of Sri Swamiji, he would be busy carrying out idol worship. One day Sri Swamiji spoke to him "Oh! How long would you be spoiling that earth? ". Hearing these words of Sri Swamiji, he gave up idol worship. **As per the words of Sri Swamiji, *Guru-Pooja*[232] is superior as compared to idol worship.**

[232] Guru Pooja: Worship of spiritual Instructor as an embodiment of God

## Mischievous People Brought Under Control

There is no shortage of wicked people who unnecessarily harass, and criticize Saints, Virtuous people, Sages, good people, and the one born as an incarnation of a deity. Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj also had come in contact with such wicked people and he controlled them in his own way. Sri Swamiji eliminated their wickedness and blessed them with devotion.

### Ahmad Ali Khan Risaldar

Sri Swami Maharaj dodged servants of Chintopant Tol and reached Akkalkot. There he set up his temporary abode at the city gate. For two to four days no one paid any attention towards him. Ahmad Ali Khan Risaldar, the in-charge of the police station of that area noticed him. He took Sri Swamiji as a crazy person.

Some people always enjoy making fun of others. Khan also wanted to make fun of Sri Swamiji and so he put a burning charcoal in to an empty smoking pipe and asked Sri Swamiji "Babaji, would you like to smoke this pipe? ". Sri Swamiji took the smoking pipe in his hand and took a deep puff. To Khans great disbelief thick smoke started coming out of it. Seeing this miracle, Khan was astounded. Realising that Sri Swamiji is a great sage; he repented and prayed for forgiveness. Then he made the necessary arrangements for Sri Swamiji's stay in Cholappa's house. Khan became a devotee of Sri Swamiji.

### Miserable Plight Of Puranik

In spite of being a great ascetic Sri Swami Maharaj never behaved like an ascetic. Being an incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself, Sri Swamiji was beyond the rules and regulations of ascetism, but very few people were aware of this fact. Therefore some people would secretly comment and pass critical remarks, in bad taste, about Sri Swamiji amongst themselves. There were a number of mischievous persons like this. Puranik, the brother-in-law of Baba Subnis was one amongst them.

Once, Puranik passed critical remarks saying "Sri Swamiji being an ascetic, why should he require a mattress to sleep and sit?". Sri Swamiji didn't give any reply immediately. A few days later, one fine evening Sri Swamiji was climbing a hill in Kadav village. Puranik was also with Sri Swamiji. It was a winter night. It was dark everywhere. Sri Swamiji climbed the hill and slept on a black rock very comfortably. Puranik was shivering in the cold. He made a request to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj I am shivering with cold. What shall I do? ". Sri Swamiji replied, "How is a soft mattress? ". Hearing this, Puranik repented for the critical remarks he had passed against Sri Swamiji. He then prayed to Sri Swamiji for forgiveness. Thereafter he became a devotee of Sri Swamiji instead of just a criticizer.

Like human beings, other animals also came under the control of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji, by his miraculous works, brought a positive change in the nature of animals.

### She-Monkey

Bambgardsaheb had reared a she-monkey and named her Sundari. She started pouncing upon people and biting them. Twice she even pounced upon Bambgard saheb, so he gave orders to shoot her. This word reached Sri Swamiji. He asked his attendant to bring the she-monkey to him. Attendant Bhujanga left to carry out his task. He spoke to Sundari, the she-monkey, "Sri Swamiji has sent me to bring you, so you come now". Hearing this Sundari started to follow Bhujanga, just like a tamed dog. After reaching there, she started to roll at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Then Sri Swamiji spoke to her, "Oh! You, do you move about in a naughty manner? From now onwards, do not bite anyone. If you bite, I shall lash you".

From then onwards, the sundari's nature underwent transformation. It stopped biting people. She would sit on the tree under which Sri Swamiji would take a seat, and remain engrossed in observing Sri Swamiji continuously.

### Sparrow

On the outskirts of Akkalkot there is a temple of Lord Rama. One day while on his stroll Sri Swamiji came to the temple. It was 7:00 AM in the morning. A sparrow was continuously twittering on the neem tree nearby. Sri Swamiji would normally visit a nearby village. One day, he spoke to the sparrow, "I will be going to a nearby village and return. Till my return, remain here on the tree. Do not move away from here". So saying, Sri Swamiji went away. When he returned at 12:00 AM, he found the sparrow sitting silently on the same neem tree. Sri Swamiji spoke to the sparrow "You might be feeling hungry. Now you go". Hearing these words, the sparrow flew away. This was the power of Sri Swamiji.

### Peasant's Bull

In Akkalkot a peasant's buffalo got very much frightened due to some reason. It went and stood on a well. No one was able to catch it all day long. The bull would attack anyone who came near it. Therefore, the peasant went to Sri Swamiji and prayed for help. Sri Swamiji spoke to him "Your bull does not allow anybody to catch it. If you do, it attacks you with horns. Is it not? ". Then Sri Swamiji got up, went up to the bull, and caught hold of its ear. The bull started following Sri Swamiji like a she-goat. From then onwards, the bull never repeated this mischief.

### Startled Elephant

In Mumbai, there was a very senior government officer named Vinayak Vasudeo alias Kakasaheb. Very often he would visit Akkalkot to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Once he came along with one hundred fifty people and got down at the kadapgam station. Since Kakasaheb was a very senior officer of the British government, the then king of Akkalkot, Rajasaheb had deputed elephants, horses, palanquins etc. along with his officers, in the service of Kakasaheb. Kakasaheb started his return journey after rendering devotional service unto Sri Swamiji for four days. Bidding him farewell Sri Swamiji said "Hurry up, Hurry up". Kakasaheb had already sent everybody ahead to the station. He was the only one left behind.

When he left in a hurry as per Sri Swamiji command, he went and saw that a calamity had befallen at the train station. The loud whistle of the train had startled on of the elephants and he sat on the street itself refusing to move ahead. Children had sat on the canopied seat on the elephant. Seeing this situation, Kakasaheb became very distressed. He remembered Sri Swamiji and called for help. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji the elephant stood up and started moving ahead towards the station. Thus the calamity was over.

## Miracles

**The life of a great saint is itself a miracle. Everything Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj did in his incarnation is miraculous in nature. These miraculous works of Sri Swami Samarth are not like magic or jugglery. Magic and Jugglery is temporary in nature. The miraculous works of incarnated saints are exceptionally great. These miraculous works transmit permanent influence and wherever it reaches, those locations are beyond the reach of magic or jugglery. Such miraculous works are always in the public interest and philanthropic in nature. Sri Swamiji, during his lifetime has performed numerous miracles, sometimes for the mental pleasure and sometimes in the favour of the devotees. The primary aim of his miracles was to eliminate the sufferings of his devotees and to make them happy as well. A magician performs miraculous jugglery and gives deception to the public but great saints by their exceptional miraculous works makes one bow their head.**

In Bhagwant Sutar's farm, Sri Swamiji gargled mouthful of water, spit the same in the fire, and set the fire ablaze. There was no water in the well at Mangalvedha. Sri Swamiji filled the well with water. He walked on the water of *Narayan-teerth*[233] and reached the other bank. He filled the 'Kotikoop' at the holy place Rameshwar in TamilNadu with worms. He milked a cow, which was not yielding milk. He changed a girl into a boy. He fed hundreds of people out of the food meant for only two to four people. How many miracles can you count? Still there are few examples given below.

### Came Out From Closed Door

There is a village called Chalambe on the bank of the Bhima River, near Mangalvedha. Once Sri Swamiji went to the village and took a halt in the Ramadasi Muth. He slept after taking meals. Ramadasi Baba had to go out, so he locked the Muth from outside and left. In the evening, people of the village observed Sri Swamiji playing in the sands of the riverbank. They went and informed Ramadasi Baba. He was amazed to hear this, since the key of the Muth was only with him. So he went to the Muth, opened the lock, and to his disbelief did not find Sri Swamiji inside. There was no other way to go out of the Muth, except the door, which was locked by him. This was a miracle for him. So immediately Ramadasi Baba went to the riverbank, prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed for forgiveness.

### Spice-Box Thrown In the Well

Sri Swamiji was taking a walk in the courtyard of the palace of Akkalkot. One servant held a spice-Box made of gold in his hand. Sri Swamiji seized it and asked king Maloji Raje "Shall I throw this box in the well? ". Raje said, "Maharaj, this belongs to you. You may do whatever you like". Sri Swamiji threw the box in the well. That day Sri Swamiji stayed in the palace. In the morning, he was playing in the courtyard. By then

[233] Narayan Teerth: Holy water

king Maloji Raje also arrived in the courtyard. Sri Swamiji asked Raje to get a bucket and rope. Then Sri Swamiji dipped the bucket in the well water and pulled it up. The bucket brought up the spice-box thrown the previous day. It was full of cloves and cardamom, but they had not got wet or touched by water. Everyone present were astonished by this miraculous play of Swamiji.

### Foot-Prints on the Wooden Seat

Chintopant Tol was offering leaves of holy basil to *Vishnu-Panchayatan*[234], while reciting *Vishnu Sahasranaam*[235]. Whenever Sri Swamiji came there at the time of worship, Tol would worship Him and then offer the leaves of holy basil along with the recitation at His lotus feet. One day exactly in the same way, Sri Swamiji arrived there. Chintopant worshipped him and prayed "I strongly desire that at the time of my worship the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji should be always near me". Sri Swamiji said, "As you wish". So saying he went away. Footprints of Sri Swamiji got inscribed on the wooden seat where Sri Swamiji was sitting. This wooden-seat is still preserved in the JoshiBuwa's Muth at Akkalkot.

### Sri Swamiji Disappeared

The king of the then Baroda State, Sriman Malharrao Gaikwad, strongly desired that Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj should come and stay in his State. He was ready to spend any amount of money to make this happen. He announced that whoever succeeds in this work, would be offered a huge gift of land. One of his chieftains, Tatyasaheb accepted the challenge. The king gave him lot of money, costumes, ornaments, and also servants to help him.

Tatyasaheb came to Akkalkot and brought Cholappa under control and influence. Cholappa was the most trustworthy disciple of Sri Swamiji, but unfortunately very greedy too. Tatyasaheb held discussions with Cholappa and designed a plot to take Sri Swamiji to Baroda in a train. Finally, they even managed to take Sri Swamiji in a closed palanquin up to Kadapgaon station. After reaching Kadapgaon, Tatyasaheb went ahead to see Sri Swamiji, but to his disbelief he found the palanquin to be empty. Sri Swamiji had disappeared.

### Meal of Chillies

Every day Devotees offered food as *Naivedya* to Sri Swamiji. This food consisted of various types of sweets and exquisite dishes as well. Seeing these sweets and dainty dishes, a clever person started thinking that Sri Swamiji's life is full of joy. He enjoys the best of opportunity to eat these dainty dishes. The inner-spirited Sri Swamiji came to know about his thoughts. He kept away the food offered by devotees, called for a

[234] Vishnu Panchayatan: Five deities – Shiva, Vishnu, Sun, Ganapati and Devee
[235] Vishnu Sahasranaam: A list of One thousand names of Lord Vishnu

plate of red chillies and ate them. The clever person, who doubted about Sri Swamiji, became very ashamed and prayed for his forgiveness.

### Meals in the Muth of Jangam

In Barsi town, Solapur District, Maharashtra, there is a Muth called Jangam Muth, which belongs to the Lingayat community. Mallikarjun Jangam who belonged to the Muth was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. One year, during the month of *Shravan* [236] he arranged for *Mahabhojan - Mahaprasad*[237]. At that time, Sri Swamiji had been put up in King Maloji Raje's palace .Sri Swamiji did not take food for seven days in the palace. When asked, he said "I am very happy by taking food with Mallikarjun Jangam in the Jangam Muth in Barsi".

To investigate the truth, Maloji Raje deputed a horse rider to Barsi. Jangam asserted, "Sri Swamiji was taking food along with us for seven days". Thus, it was proved that Sri Swamiji was taking food in Barsi while residing in Akkalkot!

[236] Shravan: Fifth month in the Hindu Calendar, July/August as per English Calendar
[237] Mahabhojan Mahaprasad: Feeding devotees for seven days in the Muth

*In this way, Sri Swamiji would dispel incurable physical diseases and poverty of the poor and afflicted people by his natural compassion. He would favour distressed people with children by liberating them from their ill fate. He would also grant them fresh life by stopping their death. He would fill their lives with happiness and invoke their implicit faith in religion.*

*However, he would severely condemn immoral-adultery. Not only that, person with such behaviour, were being exposed, disgraced and punished, so that such a person after getting a severe shock would follow a path of virtue. This was the primary aim of Sri Swamiji. The purity of one's behaviour is the first step of religion and Divine Truth. He would perform miraculous works to diversify the attention of people from worldly entanglement and attract them towards virtuous conduct and devoutness. The primary aim of his incarnation was only for the welfare of the people. He had incarnated himself, as God, on earth, to invoke good religious practice and uplift souls of the population.*

## I Belong To the Devotee, Devotee Belongs To Me

When a soul takes shelter under God, then God also accepts the soul as his own. He is the Master of orphans. He gives shelter to the helpless. He gives strength to the weak. Then he takes complete responsibility of the welfare of the devotee. He always considers it, as a duty to save the honour of His devotee. It is always the vow of God that *He belongs to the devotee and the devotee belongs to Him*.

## Your Honour Is My Responsibility

### Attendance in Office

In Solapur Vishnupant, Chintopant Tol's Son, was worked as a Government servant in the collector's office. Once, Sri Swamiji came to Tol's house. After finishing his bath and daily worship, Tol offered food to Sri Swamiji as *naivedya*. However, Sri Swamiji did not accept it. It was 10 A. M. Vishnupant had to attend his office. The collector and the officers were normally very punctual. So Chintopant told Vishnupant "You go inside, take food and then go to office". However, Vishnupant was also a faithful devotee of Sri Swamiji. How could he take food before Sri Swamiji accepts food? So he decided, whatever happens, he will not take food unless Sri Swamiji accepts it.

Finally Sri Swamiji took his food at 11:00AM. Then Vishnupant finished his meals and reached his office. He then requested the Head Clerk to forgive him for coming late. The head clerk said, "Why forgive? Today you came to work even earlier to me. See here your signature is here in the attendance register". When Vishnupant narrated the truth, all were surprised. By his miraculous work, Sri Swamiji had saved the honour of Vishnupant.

### Four Thousand People Ate the Food Meant For Forty

Sri Swamiji took a halt in village Rampur near Akkalkot. Raoji Patil of Rampur had vowed that he would feed forty Brahmins in the honour of Sri Swamiji. Now when Sri Swamiji had come to Rampur, Raoji Patil decided to fulfil his vow. His relative Vithabai collected food items meant for forty people and prepared the food. Then Raoji worshipped Sri Swamiji and then offered naivedya food but Sri Swamiji did not accept it. After sometime he said, "Feed everybody".

However, this created a difficult situation for Raoji. The food was meant for forty people only and thousands of people had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Meanwhile Sri Swamiji asked Vithabai to come there along with a basket.

Then Sri Swamiji placed food items like rice, bread etc. in that basket. On these food items, Sri Swamiji arranged to keep idols of God and Goddess of that house and then covered these idols again with bread. Then Sri Swamiji asked Vithabai to carry the basket on her head and walk around the *Tulsi* plan from left to right. Then Sri Swamiji took the Basket and kept it with him. Later, Sri Swamiji gave an order to feed all the people who had come for his 'Darshan'.

People started enjoying the food. This continued till late night. Four thousand people enjoyed the food meant for only forty people. Still there was lots of leftover. This leftover food was distributed in the village. Even the next day, people accepted this food prasad. Thus Sri Swamiji saved the honour, of his devotee Raoji Patil, by his miraculous work.

### Food for Thousand People

There is a similar narrative. A Brahmin from Mumbai lost heavily in the Stock Market. As a result of this shock, he died. His wife offered food naivedya to Sri Swamiji and fulfilled her vow of feeding a thousand people.

### The Food Provided By Bhagwant Appa Sutar

Bhagwant Appa Sutar had dug a new well in his farm. He took Sri Swamiji to his farm to offer food. He had cooked food for three people. In the meantime, devotees and attendants of Sri Swamiji also arrived. In all there were fifty people and food cooked was for only three people. Seeing this situation Bhagwant Sutar got worried. Then Sri Swamiji spoke "Why do you become sorrowful? Feed everybody!".

All the people present there ate to their satisfaction. Thus Sri Swamiji saved the honour of Bhagwant Sutar by his miraculous work.

### Naivedya-Food of a Poor Woman

A poor woman had brought naivedya-food for Sri Swamiji with full devotion. But who care's about the poor? She had a strong desire that Sri Swamiji should eat the naivedya-food. To fulfil her strong desire, Sri Swamiji called her near him and ate the naivedya-food. Then Sri Swamiji read her mental desire and blessed her with a son. Who else is there, other than Sri Swamiji, who can save the honour of the poor, as a saviour?

### Rings Lost In Moharram

It was *Moharram*[238] day. The Hindu priest Sripad Bhat and attendant Bhujanga, both wanted to see the procession of *Taboota*[239]. They requested Sri Swamiji for his permission but it was refused. They asked again, but permission was refused again. Then both stealthily left to see the procession without informing Sri Swamiji. Sripad Bhat wore gold rings weighing three to four *Tolas* in his fingers. To prevent theft, Bhat gave the rings in the safe custody of Bhujanga. Bhujanga was so much overjoyed and excited to see the procession, that he started throwing sweetmeats and dried dates on the procession and in that excitement, without his knowledge, he even threw the rings.

They soon realized this fact and started looking for the rings. In that huge crowd of thousands of people how could the rings be located? They both got tired of searching and gave up. They were about to cry and in that sorrowful state they came to Sri Swamiji and started weeping. Sri Swamiji angrily rebuked them and said, "Though I had forbidden both of you from going to the procession, why did you commit this absurdity? ". Bhujanga started crying. Whenever a devotee commits severe mistake the Sadguru always saves the honour of the devotee. Sri Swamiji said, "Do not cry. You will get back your rings automatically, simply keep quiet". Shortly afterwards a policeman caught two people and brought them there. It seemed that after getting the gold rings, there was a fight between those two people and the policeman caught them. Thus Sri Swamiji saved the honour of Bhujanga.

### Sripad Bhat

Sri Swamiji had sent Sripad Bhat to Banaras to attend a meeting of learned Brahmins. Sripad Bhat was a learned Brahmin but the learned Brahmins of Banaras considered him insignificant and so disrespected him. Sripad Bhat was totally disappointed and he wanted to return home. However, Sri Swamiji manifested himself there and ordered him to attend the meeting. Eventually, Sripad Bhat won the debate held by the learned Brahmins of Banaras. Those learned Brahmins accepted the Sripad Bhat authority and accordingly honoured him. Sri Swamiji thus protected the honour of Sripad Bhat.

### Vamanbua Badodekar

Vamanbua after completing his pilgrimage went back to Akkalkot. He wanted to go to Ganagapur, but Sri Swamiji warned, "You will get trapped in water and mud". Even so, Vamanbua obstinately disobeyed this warning and proceeded to Ganagapur. In those days there were heavy rains in that region. He got down at Udur station and started going towards Ganagapur. On the way there were small rivers. While crossing the river, he got trapped in the mud. While making movements to free himself, he got trapped deeper in the river-mud. He was trapped up to his neck. Now he started repenting for disobeying the warning of Sri Swamiji. He got mentally perturbed and started chanting the name of Sri Swamiji for help. Kind-hearted Sri Swamiji instantly came for his help. Vamanbua felt as if somebody pulled him out from that mud!

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[238] Moharram: The day of Imam Hussain's martyrdam, which is held sacred by Mohammedans and celebrated as a day of mourning
[239] Taboota: The bier carried by Mohammedans in Moharram

Then he went to Ganagapur. While taking bath at the *Sangam* he was saved from getting drowned in the river. When he returned to Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji said, "You are saved from getting drowned in the mud and water and safely you have returned, is it not? ". Vamanbua prayed for forgiveness.

### Kanphata Ekanath

Kanphata Eknath belonged to the *Nath-Sect*[240]. He was a devotee and attendant of Sri Swamiji. Because of his tall and muscular physique and hot-headed temperament, other attendants would remain subdued towards him. He would shower his anger on attendants like Sripad Bhat, Cholappa, Vishwanathbua, and Sundarabai. There was a fear amongst them that Eknath might take someone's life someday and so a complaint was lodged against him and finally he was put behind bars.

Kanphata would never take his food without taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', so when he was arrested and put behind bars he remained without food for more than four days. One day Sri Swamiji was sitting in a farm near city gate. By some coincidence, prisoners were also brought near the city gate. Hearing the continuous shouts of victory in praise of Sri Swamiji made Kanphata very restless. He became very anxious to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Finally he lost his control and got up from his seat with an intention of going towards Sri Swamiji. However, the policeman did not allow him to go and so Eknath knocked down the policeman.

He then seized the policeman's sword and forced his way to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. An old Brahmin was sitting near Sri Swamiji. From a distance he resembled Cholappa. At the mere sight of the old Brahmin, who appeared like Cholappa, Eknath got infuriated and struck him 7-8 times with his sharp sword. Sri Swamiji witnessed this particular act of Ekanath. The old Brahmin became unconscious due of those sword-strokes. Nevertheless, the compassionate Sri Swamiji saved him from death since

[240] Nath Sect: A member of the medieval religious sect called the Nathpanth.
The Nath Sampradaya, a development of the earlier Siddha or Avadhut Sampradaya is an ancient lineage of spiritual masters. Its founding is traditionally ascribed to Shri Bhagavan Dattatreya, considered by some to have been an incarnation of Lord Shiva. However, the establishment of the Naths as a distinct historical sect began around the 8th or 9th century with a simple fisherman, Matsyendranath (sometimes called Minanath, who may be identified with or called the father of Matsyendranath in some sources).

One story of the origin of the Nath teachings is that Matsyendranath was swallowed by a fish and while inside the fish overheard the teachings given by Lord Shiva to his wife Parvati, who had taken her to the bottom of the ocean in order to avoid being overheard. After being rescued from the fish by another fisherman, Matsyendranath took initiation as a sannyasin from Siddha Carpati. It was Matsyendranath who became known as the founder of the Nath Sampradaya.

Matysendranath's two most important disciples were Caurangi and Gorakshanath. The latter came to eclipse his Master in importance in many of the branches and sub-sects of the Nath Sampradaya. Even today, Gorakshanath is considered by many to have been the most influential of the ancient Naths. He is reputed to have written the first books dealing with Laya yoga and the raising of the kundalini-shakti. He is also reputed to have been the original inventor of Hatha yoga.

The Nath Sampradaya does not recognize caste barriers, and their teachings were adopted by outcasts and kings alike. The heterodox Nath tradition has many sub-sects, but all honor Matsyendranath and Gorakshanath as the founders of the tradition.

under normal circumstances no one would have survived even one stroke of Eknath's powerful sword stroke. Thus Sri Swamiji also saved Eknath from the serious offence of murder.

### The Veeda of Goddess

Vamanbua Badodekar, while on a pilgrimage, went up the Saptshringi hill in Nashik District to take 'Darshan' of Goddess Saptshringi. There, Vamanbua requested for the *veeda* from Goddess Parvati's mouth as a form of favour or blessings. However, the priests of the temple started making fun of him and said "In case Sri Swami Maharaj of Akkalkot is the incarnation of the Divine Lord and your devotion towards Sri Swamiji is true, then *Goddess Jagadamba*[241] would bless you with the veeda from her mouth". Vamanbua prayed to the Goddess and lo! The veeda from her mouth fell on his body. Vamanbua returned to Akkalkot and prostrated before Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji said, "You went to Saptshringee and started calling my name for help. I only had to bless that veeda to you". Thus Sri Swamiji protected the honour of Vamanbua by blessing him with the veeda from the mouth of Goddess Parvati.

### Waikar Brahmin

A Brahmin from a holy place called Wai came to Akkalkot. After taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' he spoke saying, "a few days back a saintly man came to Wai. After performing religious ceremonies for feeding the Brahmins in the cause of lord Dattatrey, he borrowed rupees twenty-five from me and then he disappeared. Thus he cheated a poor man like me. Maharaj I had lent the money in your honour. Should I suffer like this for my good act? ". Sri Swamiji did not say anything.

There was a big rush to take 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. In the meanwhile, Sri Swamiji raised his finger and it pointed at the same Brahmin who had runaway with the money. Waikar caught hold of the Brahmin. A quarrel started between the two. Then finally the Brahmin agreed to having cheated Waikar. Nevertheless, he didn't have the money to repay Waikar. Then Waikar seized few of the Brahmin's belongings and returned home. Sri Swamiji did not oppose Waikar's actions for maintaining the honour of his name. This way God protects the honour of his devotee.

[241] Goddess Jagadamba: Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's divine consort.

## Tutelary Deity

*From the viewpoint of accomplishment, there are three kinds of deity's - Kul- devata, Upasya- devata and Ishta- devata*.

A particular deity worshipped by a family through successive generations is called as a *Kul-devata* or Family deity. Thus family deity becomes the protector of the family and man worships this deity for the well being of his family.

When a Guru advises a family to worship a particular deity, that deity becomes the *Upasya devata* or Adorable deity of the family. From this deity, man makes progress in his life. Through worship he pleases the deity and makes progress on the path of accomplishment.

The deity, whom man sincerely worships in his heart, is called *Ishta devata* or Tutelary deity. To attain this deity, man offers everything that belongs to him and gets contended. Through this deity man elevates to a higher level, which leads him to prosperity.

For a devotee, all these three deity's might be one and the same or different. Whether a devotee gains protection from his family deity (Kul devata), or makes progress in life through his adorable deity (Upasya devata), still he does not get happiness till he sees his tutelary deity (Ishta devata). Though the same principle is inherent in all the deity's, due of the attachment to the external attributes, man likes his tutelary deity. This entirely depends on one's wish or personal inclination.

Sri Swamiji himself was the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya, the Divine Lord, the Supreme Spirit. However, a number of devotees, even after obtaining the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, were earnestly longing on to their tutelary deity. Hence to expel this diversity of sentiment and to infuse a sense of oneness in the minds of these devotees, Sri Swamiji would grace them with a vision of Him appearing in the form of their tutelary deity or *Ishta devata*.

### Darshan of Lord Vitthal

There was a young ascetic of the Maratha community in Mangalvedha. He had an earnest desire for the 'Darshan' of his tutelary deity, Lord Vitthal184. Sri Swamiji advised him "Go to the holy place *Dwaraka* and stay there making small pieces of the earthen tiles matching the size of *copper coin*[242]. Then you will get the 'Darshan' of Lord Vitthal". Therefore, the young ascetic went to Dwaraka and started making small pieces of the earthen tiles. Lord Vitthal graced him 'Darshan' three times.

[242] In this context: A coper coin in circulation during those time equal to the sixty -fourth part of a rupee.

## Janabai

In Mangalvedha, solapur District, Maharashtra, there was a woman named Janabai. Right from her childhood she had developed a habit to visit *Pandharpur*. On every Ekadeshi[243] day and return the next day.

Once during the *Ashadh*[244] month while was she was on her pilgrimage to Pandharpur torrential rain started pouring. Heavy winds started blowing and there was thunder and lightning all around. It became extremely difficult for her to proceed further. Janabai got completely drenched in rain and started shivering with cold. Under this extreme circumstance, she hid her child in her bosom, put the bundle of clothes on her head, and started walking ahead chanting the name of Lord Vitthal. Finally due to fear of lightening and thunder she took shelter under a tree.

**On the other side of the same street, under a tree, Sri Swamiji was seated and laughing. Janabai offered her obeisance and prayed to him "Maharaj till now I had never missed my pilgrimage to Pandharpur. Today I am facing this calamity. What shall I do? ". Sri Swamiji replied, "Janabai, do you think that Lord Vitthal is present only at Pandharpur?. Is he not present at places other than Pandharpur?. Perceive Lord Vitthal in your own heart. Lord Vitthal is permanently present in your self". Saying so, Sri Swamiji stood up in the posture of Lord Vitthal, placing both hands on his loins and Janabai got the Darshan of Lord Vitthal. Her earnest desire was fulfilled.**

**Then Janabai spoke "Maharaj, you are Lord Vitthal himself. You have highly favoured a female slave like me by bestowing your 'Darshan'. Even if I prepare shoes from my skin and put on your feet, I will not get freed from this obligation."**

## Soordas

In Dwaraka Sri Swami Samarth bestowed eyesight to the blind saint Soordas. Then Sri Swami Samarth manifested himself in the form of Lord Krishna and granted Darshan as a tutelary deity / *Ishta devata* to Soordas.

## Maharudrarao Deshpande

In Ambejogai, Beed District, Maharashtra, Jagirdar Maharudrarao Deshpande became a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. Once when he went to the holy place Pandharpur he got the Darshan of Sri Swamiji in the place of Lord Vitthal. He worshipped Sri Swamiji with full devotion and then returned home in a dazed condition.

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[243] Ekadashi: The eleventh day of a fortnight. Hindus treat Ekadashi as a very holy day and fast on that day. Considered very auspicious.

[244] Ashad: The fourth month of the Hindu year and the month June\July, as per English Calendar

### Darshan of Malhari (Lord Shiva)

There was a craftsman in Mohol, Solapur District. He was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. He would never take food without taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. One day when he was going for the 'Darshan', it suddenly occurred to him to take his family deity Malhari Martand Mhalasakant Lord Shiva's 'Darshan'. Thinking such he reached Sri Swamiji place. Sri Swamiji spoke to him "Now take the 'Darshan' of the God desired and honoured by you as family deity". So saying Sri Swamiji manifested himself in the form of a hermit with matted hair, Lord Shiva.

The craftsman prostrated at the feet of Sri Swamiji, manifested as Lord Shiva, and started praying, "Today by this 'Darshan' of Lord Shiva all my forty two generations have been emancipated. Sri Swamiji, kindly shower your mercy and uplift me". Then Sri Swamiji said "Continue worshipping me with devotional singing. Look for divinity in all the created beings". The craftsman got the 'Darshan' of his family deity as per his strong desire and experienced oneness with divinity.

### Darshan of Lord Kartikeya

Ramshastri was an attendant of Sri Swamiji. Some people of Akkalkot had undertaken a journey to take *Kartikeya Swami's*[245] 'Darshan'. Ramshastri also wanted to go along. When he asked Sri Swamiji for his permission, Sri Swamiji said, "Do not go". Ramshastri was very disappointed. He became restless for the 'Darshan' of Kartikeya Swami. After a few days, there was *Kartiki Poornima*[246]. Ramshastri started taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' as usual. After the end of *aarati* Sri Swamiji stood up and graced Ramshastri by appearing in the form of Lord Kartikeya. Having being blessed with the 'Darshan' of Lord Kartikeya as per his earnest desire, Ramshastri prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji.

### Darshan of Lord Kartikeya to Dhondibua

Dhondibua, a disciple of Sri Swamiji earnestly desired for the 'Darshan' of Lord Kartikeya and he too wanted to go to the congregation held in honour of Lord Kartikeya. When he asked for permission Sri Swamiji spoke to him "Do you think that Kartikeya Swami is not present here? ". Hearing this Dhondibua realised his mistake. Then Dhondibua prayed to Sri Swamiji "You are in person, Lord Kartikeya Swami himself. Then why should I go to the fair unnecessarily? ". So Dhondibua prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji considering him Lord Kartikeya.

### Darshan of Lord Vitthal to Tandulwadkar

Vamanbua Tandulwadkar was a pilgrim, who would regularly visit Pandharpur, the holy place of Lord Vitthal. Once, he came to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'.

[245] Kartikeya: Son of Lord Shiva

[246] Kartik Poornima: Full moon day of Kartik month, the 8th Hindu month and the month of November or December as per English calendar

After taking the 'Darshan' he became very sentimental. Vamanbua was in the habit of singing devotional songs. He wanted to sing devotional songs in the presence of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji went in person to the location where Vamanbua had taken a halt. Seeing Sri Swamiji Vamanbua became extremely happy. He got fully absorbed in singing devotional songs in the presence of Sri Swamiji. He got fully immersed in devotion through his singing and finally he fell down unconscious.

After regaining consciousness he started singing again and got absorbed in devotion. At the end of his singing people present there asked him "While singing how did you become silent and unconscious? ". Vamanbua said "While I was singing devotional songs, Sri Swamiji changed his form and appeared in the form of *Lord Pandurang*[247] of Pandharpur, with light complexion, wearing yellow silk cloth, crown worn on the head, large rings worn in the ears and both hands placed on his waist. By the sight of Lord Vitthal, I went in a trance and lost my consciousness. Sri Swamiji is the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. He is not different from Lord Vitthal". Vamanbua felt fully blessed by the graceful appearance of his tutelary deity Lord Vitthal in Sri Swamiji.

## Darshan of Dwarkadhish Lord Krishna

An ascetic, on a pilgrimage, wanted to visit holy place *Dwaraka* for Lord Krishna's 'Darshan'. There are four places of worship, normally referred to as *Chardham (four centers)*, two of Lord Shiva-one at Kedarnath (North) the other at Rameshwar (South) and two of Lord Vishnu-One at Jagannath (East) and the other at Dwaraka (West).

When he reached Rameshwar in Tamilnadu he suffered from a disease called 'dropsy'. On some devotee's advice he came to Akkalkot and stood in the crowd for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Sri Swamiji called the ascetic nearby and said, "You had a strong desire to go to Dwaraka for Lord Krishna's 'Darshan' is it not? ". And before his very eyes, Sri Swamiji manifested himself in the living form of 'Lord Krishna' with a conch, 'Chakra' (circular holy weapon) and a mace.

Seeing the marvellous sight of Lord Krishna tears of joy started overflowing from his eyes. By the 'Darshan' of his tutelary deity, Lord Krishna, he lost his consciousness.

## Darshan of Lord Dattatreya

An ascetic was restless since a number of years for the *Sagun* 'Darshan' of Lord Dattreya. He undertook a number of pilgrimages. He performed a number of religious ceremonials. While wandering such he came to Sri Swamiji. Seeing the lustrous physique of Sri Swamiji, the ascetic was stunned. His penance became fruitful. Sri Swamiji stood up and manifested himself in the form of Lord Dattatreya, with three heads, six arms, each arm holding Mala (Rosary), Kamandalu (Holy pot), Damaru (Holy musical instrument), Trishul (Trident), Shankh (Conch) and Chakra (Holy weapon).

[247] Lord Pandurang: Another name of Lord Vithal.

Seeing the all-attribute form of Lord Dattatreya the ascetic got deeply immersed in the sea of happiness and started_saying "Sri Swami Maharaj you are the Supreme Being Lord Dattatreya himself in person. You have given me your Darshan. I have been fully blessed by the grace of your Darshan".

### The Incarnation of Lord Dattatreya

One fine day Govindrao, son of Chintopant Tol, worshipped Sri Swamiji and then asked him "Maharaj are you also present at the confluence of the holy place Ganagapur? ". Sri Swamiji said, "Yes, I am present there too". Govindrao got visionary insight in his dream, that Sri Swamiji is sitting in the temple of Ganagapur and wearing the *Padukas* of Lord Dattatreya. Govindrao asked the residing priest "Who is sitting in the temple? ". He replied, "Sri Swamiji of Akkalkot is sitting there". Govindrao took the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji who had manifested in the form of Lord Dattatreya and felt fully blessed, as he had accomplished his cherished object. He became a great devotee of Sri Swamiji.

### Darshan of Lord Rama

Sitarampant Nene of Garod village was a devotee of Lord Rama. He would carry out rigorous worship to get Lord Ramchandra's 'Darshan'. Once he came to Akkalkot. He took Sri Swamiji 'Darshan' and felt fully contented. He felt as though he had the 'Darshan' of Lord Rama. Therefore, he remained in Akkalkot and started rendering devotional service to Sri Swamiji. One afternoon Sri Swamiji manifested himself as Lord Rama and graced the 'Darshan' to Sitarampant Nene, thus clearing his mental agony, Sitarampant Nene, returned home with continuous shouts of victory regarding Sri Swamiji.

### Darshan of Goddess Mahalaxmi

In Sangli, Maharashtra, there was a saint named Hanamantarao Kotnis Maharaj of Chimad religions sect, who initiated and continued the tradition of non-stop devotional singing. Even today the tradition of devotional singing is being continued.

He had been to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. He paid his obeisance to Sri Swamiji with a standing posture and said "Maharaj, please forgive me. I cannot pay my obeisance by prostrating at your lotus feet as I have already resolved that I shall only prostrate reverentially at the lotus feet of my family deity Mahalaxmi". To this, Sri Swamiji smiled and said, "Goddess Mahalaxmi, appears like this, is it not? ". So saying Sri Swamiji manifested himself in the form of Goddess Mahalaxmi. Kotnis Maharaj prostrated reverentially at the lotus feet of Goddess Mahalaxmi and paid his obeisance. Then Sri Swamiji said, "Do not maintain the sentiments of diversity. By the resolution based on this sentiment, you will have to undergo crisis of agony".

Even today at Sangli, in the *Muth* of Saint Kotnis Maharaj Sri Swamiji is being worshipped in the form of Goddess Mahalaxmi.

### Darshan Of Goddess Aadimaya (Goddess Parvati)

Nana Rekhi of Ahmadnagar, Maharashtra, was a favoured disciple of Sri Swamiji. He was a great astrologer. He had prepared the horoscope of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji personally had given him the approval for the same. Sri Swamiji also gave him *Atmalinga*.

Nana Rekhi installed the Padukas of Sri Swamiji and built a *Muth* in Ahmadnagar. During the construction of the Muth, Rekhi faced a big calamity. Sri Swamiji appeared himself manifested in the form of Goddess Parvati and warded off the calamity.

**This way Sri Swamiji blessed supreme bliss to a number of devotees by gracing them with the 'Darshan' of their favourite Ishta devata (tutelary deity) and made them experience the fact that the Supreme Being is only ONE in this universe. As per one's devotion a person desires the 'Darshan' of one's favourite form of God and then attain supreme bliss. God always graces a devotee and appears in the divine form most favourite to him.**

## God, You Are the Supreme Spirit

**God is present in the heart of every living being in the form of Supreme Spirit. Saint Kabirdas has said "Your God is always present in you, just like a flower always carries fragrance with it". In this form of Supreme Spirit God keeps under observation the condition, activity, and constitution of every living being. He is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, and Omniscient. By his endless miraculous works Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj, the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya, has displayed that HE dwells in the heart of every being as a Supreme Spirit.**

### Chintopant Tol's Worry

Sri Swamiji started his journey from Mohol village and reached Solapur. One day Sri Swamiji was sitting in a naked condition in one of temples at Solapur. When Chintopant Tol came to the temple for the temple deity's 'Darshan' , he saw Sri Swamiji sitting there. Observing the divine form of Sri Swamiji a thought came to his mind, "May be or may not be, but he surely does appear like a saint". Omniscient Sri Swamiji came to know what Tol was thinking and he spoke "Whether I am a saint or not, in what way are you concerned with it? Mind your own business". Hearing these words, Tol was taken aback. He prostrated at the feet of Sri Swamiji, implored humbly, and brought him home to offer food. From then on, Sri Swamiji from time to time would visit Tol's house.

Once, Sri Swamiji had been Tol house. At that time, a doubt arose in Tol's mind "Sri Swamiji takes food anywhere, anyplace. It is not fair to arrange his seat in our row. It is better to serve food to him in a different place". Meanwhile Sri Swamiji spoke out "Doubt has arisen in your mind. So I shall not take food in your house". So saying he started to leave Tol's house. Tol regretted thinking this way. He implored humbly, prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji, and prayed for forgiveness. He then offered a seat to Sri Swamiji in his own row with full devotion and served food.

### Yog-Nidra

One evening in Solapur Sri Swamiji went to Ganapatrao Joshi's house. Govindrao Tol accompanied him. After the meals, Joshi arranged a bed for Sri Swamiji to sleep on. Shortly, Sri Swamiji went in deep sleep and started snoring.

Govindrao thought that Sri Swamiji in spite of being a great Yogi snores like an ordinary person. It is the dictum of Bhagavad-Gita that when all created living beings sleep during the night only the ascetic remains awake throughout. In the meanwhile Sri Swamiji started coughing and spoke to Tol "You goldsmith, it is not so, as you thought".

Joshi and Tol both realised that Sri Swamiji had not slept but was deeply absorbed in meditative contemplation.

## Silk Dhotee

In Solapur Sri Swamiji came to Ganapatrao Joshi's house. With great devotion Joshi gave a bath to Sri Swamiji, dressed him with a silk-dhotee, and then worshipped him. Then Joshi offered naivedya food to Sri Swamiji. In the meantime a thought came up in Joshi's mind "If after taking the food Sri Swamiji goes out and gives this silk-dhotee to somebody? ". Instantly omniscient Sri Swamiji spoke "Take your silk-dhotee". So saying Sri Swamiji got undressed, returned the silk-dhotee to Joshi, and left the place in a naked condition. Joshi started imploring humbly but Sri Swamiji said "A suspicion arouse in your mind regards the silk-dhotee". Where is the place for suspicion in devotion?

## Yahoodi Doctor

Hearing the glory of Sri Swamiji a *Yahoodi*[248] doctor went to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Observing the Yahoodi doctor Sri Swamiji asked, "How many eyes have you broken?". The Yahoodi was taken aback as to how did Sri Swamiji came to know that he is a eye doctor? Thereafter, the Yahoodi doctor became a devotee of Sri Swamiji.

## Thief in Mogalai

In Baroda there was a wealthy person named Harischandra Gopal. A Brahmin residing in his house stole two thousand rupees and ran away. They searched everywhere but unfortunately could not locate him. Hence the wealthy person Gopal came to Akkalkot. He prayed to Sri Swamiji regarding the theft. Sri Swamiji_spoke "Your thief has been caught and put under custody in a particular village of *Mogalai*[249]". With this information Harischandra Gopalji went to the village. After locating the thief he recovered his money.

## Balappa's Japa

Balappa was a great devotee and attendant of Sri Swamiji. Once, he was engrossed in chanting Lord Ganesh's name. Sri Swamiji had just woken up from his sleep and was sitting on the bedstead. Some devotee asked Sri Swamiji as to what is Balappa doing? Sri Swamiji replied, "He is weaving a sack cloth". Hearing these words of Sri Swamiji, Balappa understood that this *Japa*[250] is a waste. After giving up chanting Lord Ganesh's name, Balappa started the continuous repetition of Sri Swamiji's name. Next day some devotee asked Sri Swamiji as to what is Balappa doing? Sri Swamiji replied, "He is weaving a blanket". Sri Swamiji had understood the nature of chanting performed by Balappa.

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[248] Yahoodi: Israeli
[249] Mogalai: The then Hyderabad
[250] Japa: Chanting. Naamsmaran.

### On The River Bank

Balaji Sadoba was a postal superintendent. He took the weekend off from work and came to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After taking Darshan he had planned to return since he had to attend office on Monday. So he requested Sri Swamiji for permission to leave Akkalkot, but Sri Swamiji made Balaji sit by his side and started talking to him saying, "River bank on the other side". Balaji was getting late and the thought of missing his train made him very nervous. This thought made him uneasy. Eventually, he evaded Sri Swamiji and reached the train station. He came to know that the train had still not arrived since River Krishna had flooded. Balaji had to pass the whole night on the railway station itself. Now Balaji started repenting that he could not understand the indication given by Sri Swamiji.

### The Sword and the Spittoon

The Governor of Mumbai had come to Solapur. He was British man. He had ordered Maloji Raje, the King of the then Akkalkot state, to come to Solapur. Before going to Solapur Raje took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' and requested for his permission. Sri Swamiji took the sword and the spittoon from a soldier and placed them in the hands of Maloji Raje. Maloji Raje went to Solapur but the English Governor did not honour him nor extend any hospitality. In the state of Akkalkot, possession of weapons was prohibited earlier. Now that prohibition was lifted. Giving the sword and the spittoon to Raje, Sri Swamiji had given the indication.

### Bring and Give Me Pomegranates

A businessman from Mumbai was in a very difficult situation. He remembered Sri Swamiji and vowed to offer pomegranates to Sri Swamiji if his planned work gets fulfilled. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, he got success in his project and he came to Akkalkot with pomegranates. In a hurry he forgot the packet of pomegranates at his dwelling. When Sri Swamiji saw the businessman he exclaimed, "Oh, gentleman where are my pomegranates? Bring and give me".

The businessman prayed for forgiveness, went back to his dwelling, brought the packet and offered the same to Sri Swamiji.

### Marriage with Khandya

Vishwasrao alias Appasaheb Mane was a chieftain in the royal court of the then state of Akkalkot. His daughter Jamanabai had grown up but he was not able to find a suitable match for her. One day when he went for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', he offered his salute with folded hands and entreated. Sri Swamiji spoke "Oh, why do you worry? I have fixed her marriage with Khandya".

Appasaheb Mane was not able to understand what Sri Swamiji meant but he didn't have any courage to ask again. He kept quiet. After some days a marriage proposal for Jamanabai arrived directly from the King of Baroda - Khanderao Gaikwad. Appasaheb Mane's happiness knew no bounds. He felt highly honoured by this marriage proposal from the King. The words of Sri Swamiji had manifested.

### You Would Have Been Entangled

Raosaheb Dhavale was a chief Manager of the Chieftain Kibe. He renounced all worldly attachments and came to Akkalkot to render devotional service unto Sri Swamiji. His mother resided in Benaras. she was very old. Once Raosaheb got a telegram that his mother was sick. He asked Sri Swamiji for permission to go to Benaras. Permission was refused. Hence Raosaheb did not go to Benaras. After a few days, again a telegram came. However, Sri Swamiji refused permission this time too. After few days for the third time a telegram came. Then Sri Swamiji said, "Now you go". After Raosaheb reached Benaras, his mother died. Completing the funeral rites, when he came back, Sri Swamiji said, "Had you gone earlier, you would have been involved in a mess for two-three years". The supreme spirit Sri Swamiji, had already known in advance, the time of death of Raosaheb Dhavale's mother.

### Leave This Place and March Away

Madhavrao Dadasaheb Vinchurkar was a regent in the then State of Akkalkot. He was a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. He was affected by Leprosy, which was cured by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji.

One day Vinchurkar saheb was sitting in his office. At that time, Sri Swamiji unexpectedly came there and said, "Now you load your chair, table and all things on a camel and leave this place and march away". Vinchurkar asked politely, "Maharaj, where shall I go? ". Sri Swamiji said, "Go there, where thousands of people, will salute you". So saying Sri Swamiji left. After some days the relations between Vinchurkar and Maloji Raje estranged and Vinchurkar started looking after his own state of Vinchur. Thus, there was a rise in honour and dignity of Vinchurkar.

### The Struggle of the Year 1857

In the year 1857, Indians rose in revolt against the sovereignty of British. Sri Swamiji had already realised the outcome of the revolt. So in Akkalkot Sri Swamiji used to sit with his head thrust in a cannon's mouth. This canon was named Laxmi. In those days British had blown up thousands of Indians using these cannons. One day Sri Swamiji spoke, "Now nothing remained belonging to Hindus. They have lost their elephants, horses, palanquins, and everything else. Within a few days, the British dismissed all the states and seized their powers.

### Revolutionary Vasudeo Balwant Phadke

Vasudeo Balwant Phadke is considered as the first revolutionary of India who held the banner aloft of the armed revolution against the sovereignty of the British Empire in India. He had *girded up his loins*[251] to destroy British slavery and free India from the clutches of the British Empire. To achieve success in this work he came to Akkalkot for the kind blessings of Sri Swamiji. However, the supreme spirit Sri Swamiji showed indifference in this proposed work since he already knew the result of this struggle. Vasudeo Balawant had to return disappointed.

### The Meaning of Panchdashi

In Akkalkot, learned men like Ram Joshi Ganapatrao and Gopal Joshi held discussions to decipher and understand the contends of Panchdashi book. Panchdashi book is part of the Vedant literature. One day, none of them could understand the meaning of a *shloka*[252] from the book. Hence they went to Sri Swamiji for clarification.

When they were in the process of having Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' and before they even quoted anything Sri Swamiji pronounced the shloka and narrated its meaning to the surprise of all. Everyone was stunned and greatly pleased.

### Third Marriage of Sohoni

Ganesh Hari Sohoni remarried after his first wife died. Unfortunately his second wife too passed away. He thought that if Sri Swamiji would give him permission, he could marry for the third time. However, Sri Swamiji did not permit him and resumed his smoking adding live coal to his pipe. He indicated to Sohoni that his third marriage would be futile.

Later on Sohoni secured a job in the then state of Baroda. While in Baroda, Sohoni developed a strong desire to get married. Finally he found a nice girl and got married. This was his third marriage. Eight days after his wedding his wife fell down while climbing the staircase and broke her waist. She was given the best of medical treatment but in vain. She became a handicap. Sohoni had to carry her on a low stool on his back while moving around. The impressive wedding ceremony came to an end but the smoking pipe remained empty!

**There are several such occasions wherein Sri Swamiji, by his omnipresence and omniscience either had showered kind grace on the devotees or given indications of the future happenings to them.**

[251] Girded up his loins: i.e. Vowed.
[252] Shloka: Sanskrit verse

## One Who Is Showered With Kind Grace

**During his incarnation period Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj had showered kind grace on numerous devotees and redress their illness, poverty, and crisis finally giving them an opportunity to make progress in life. So also Sri Swamiji showered his kindness on the deserving devotees and spiritually elevated them.**

### Nrusimha Saraswati from Alandi

In the holy place Alandi in Pune, Maharashtra, there was a saint named Nrusinha Saraswati. He practised yoga rigorously but was unable to go into a trance in spite of his best efforts. He wandered to many places in search of a Guru. Finally he came to Sri Swamiji. When he reached Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji was sitting in the storehouse near the palace. When Nrusinha Saraswati took his 'Darshan', Sri Swamiji showered kind grace on him and recited a stanza narrating the awakening of the *Adnya chakra*[253] of Kundalini. Nrusinha Saraswati went into trance instantly and lost his outward consciousness. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji Nrusinha Saraswati understood the secret of deep meditation.

Nrusinha Saraswati had already attained *siddhi*[254]. Once when he came to Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji said "Oh! Still you have not given up your prostitute? ". With folded hands Nrusinha Saraswati said "Maharaj, there is only one remedy to give up that prostitute, it is only your kind grace". In Sri Swamiji's hall of audience no one really understood this dialog between the two and all the devotees were wonderstruck to hear the fact that an ascetic has kept a prostitute. Later, Nrusinha Saraswati personally gave the necessary clarifications to the devotees that Sri Swamiji was talking about his *siddhis* (spiritual accomplishment resulting from opening of kundalini chakra's).

**By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, he gave up his *siddhis*, reduced his yogic practices, and turned his attention to devotional path. In spite of being an ascetic, he would get so much deeply engrossed while singing devotional songs that he would get unconscious while singing**.

[253] Adnya Chakra: The kundalini energy center at the center of forehead between the eyebrows.
A chakra is a nexus of metaphysical and/or biophysical energy residing in the human body along the spinal cord. There are seven charkas/centers and each has its own properties. They are (from bottom of the spine and up): Muladhara or The base or root chakra, Swadhisthana or The sacral chakra, Manipura or The solar plexus chakra, Anahata or The heart/emotions chakra, Vishuddha or The throat chakra, Ajna or The Third eye, and Sahasrara or The crown charka.
The chakras are described as being aligned in an ascending column from the base of the spine to the top of the head. Each chakra is associated with a certain color, multiple physiological functions, an aspect of consciousness, a classical element, and other distinguishing characteristics.They are visualised as lotuses with a different number of petals in every chakra.
The chakras are thought to vitalise the physical body and to be associated with interactions of a physical, emotional and mental nature. They are considered loci of life energy, or prana, (also called shakti), which is thought to flow among them along pathways called nadis. The function of the chakras is to spin and draw in this Universal Life Force Energy to keep the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical health of the body in balance.
[254] Siddhi: Spiritual Accomplishment. Power emanating from the state of awakening of the charkas. Each charka opens up a spate of mystical powers. A person who has all the seven centers/charkas awakened is said to be one with the universal spirit/God.

Staying in Alandi Nrusinha Saraswati carried out religious works like building riverbank, chariot of saint Dnyaneshwar Maharaj, a charitable institution meant for the accommodation of travellers, a school for teaching the Vedas and acquired great fame.

### Muslim Saint

When Sri Swami Samarth was in Mangalvedha a Muslim would render service to him. He would prepare a small smoking pipe with tobacco for Sri Swamiji. Due to demoniac possession he would wander aimlessly. He would maintain himself by begging. One day Sri Swamiji showered his kind grace by placing his hand on the Muslim's head and blessed him. With this blessing the Muslim became a saint and started wandering from place to place. He acquired superhuman powers. A number of miserable people started approaching him for relief.

### Deo Mamledar

Yashvant Mahadeo Bhosekar was a revenue officer in charge of a *tahsil*. He came to Mangalvedha for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. He stayed in Mangalvedha for few days and rendered devotional service very great faith unto Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji was very pleased by his service and blessed him. Eventually he became a fully accomplished person and became well known as "Deo Mamledar".

### Gave Swami

Sri Swamiji came to Mohol Village in Solapur District, from Mangalvedha. There was a Lingayat Swami named Gave Swami in Mohol village. He was a fully accomplished ascetic. After taking the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji Gave Swami was so much influenced that he gave up his path of Yoga and accepted the path of devotion.

### Mouni Bua

In Solapur, Maharashtra, a North Indian Brahmin named Mukund would take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' daily and pray "Kindly liberate me from this worldly shackles". At last, one day Sri Swamiji spoke "Be passionless and renounce all attachment. Then you will gain happiness". No sooner he heard these words from Sri Swamiji he went into a trance and reached accomplishment.

Crowds of people started pouring in for his Darshan. To get riddance from this botheration he started observing complete silence. Due to this vow of silence he came to be known as *Mouni Baba*[255].

[255] Mouni Baba: One who has taken a vow of silence

### Baba Gholap

In Nasik, Maharashtra, there was a Brahmin named Baba Gholap, well versed in the *Vedas* and *Shastras*. He stayed in an ashram, which he had built. On account of severe penance two good qualities, humbleness and impartiality were borne in him. He was in search of a Guru. One day as usual, when he went to Godavari River to take a bath, Sri Swamiji manifested in the form of a divine ascetic with long arms extending up to the knees, gave him the divine Darshan, and said, "I am a resident of Akkalkot. I have come here to favour you with the fruits of your deeds". So saying Sri Swamiji cleared all the doubts from his mind. Sri Swamiji blessed Gholap and vanished.

When Gholap went to Akkalkot and took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan', he reached the highest state of meditation in which he achieved unity with the Absolute. Sri Swamiji gave his *Padukas* to Gholap. Gholap came back to Nasik, installed the Padukas of Sri Swamiji, and built a temple. Then he renounced all worldly ties and accepted asceticism.

### The Things In A Panchpatra

Some women had come for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. One woman told the other "Take that thing kept in the *Panchpatra*[256]". In between their talk Sri Swamiji spoke "Did you get that thing kept in the *panchpatra*? ". They all paid their obeisance to Sri Swamiji and then started laughing. Then Sri Swamiji spoke to the woman again "Go and take the 'Darshan' of that fig tree, then you will come to know".

The woman took the 'Darshan' of the fig tree, came back, and said "From the 'Darshan' of that fig tree, I learnt that this body of a human being, made up of five essential elements viz. Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, is itself a panchpatra. And it contains the inner spirited soul". Because of the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, this uneducated woman understood the deep concept, whatever essence and the mystery about the Supreme Being, which exists in the illusory world, could be accrued by the association of saints.

### Jamadar of Maindargi

There was a Muslim *Jamadar*[257], who belonged to Maindargi village. He was assigned to guard prisoners. One evening a prisoner escaped from the jail and hid in a ditch. At night when prisoners were counted, it was found that one prisoner was missing. The old Jamadar became nervous as he would be dismissed from his job and would not get his pension. He was a devotee of Sri Swamiji. He vowed to Sri Swamiji that if the escaped prisoner gets caught and if he gets out of this situation then he would resign from his job and render service to Sri Swamiji.

[256] Panchapatra: A small cylinderical vessel
[257] Jamadar: Chief Police constable.

The prisoner who had escaped was located in the morning. The prisoner said that through out the night, whenever he would try to run away, an ascetic would stop him from doing so. The Jamadar handed over the prisoner to the concerned officer in charge of the tahsil. He then resigned from his job as per his vow. He left behind his household and came to Sri Swamiji and remained there rendering devotional service. One day Sri Swamiji threw his shoes on the Jamadar. The Jamadar considered this as *Prasad* and took the shoes to his village Maindargi and started worshipping those shoes.

His wife and children felt very bad as the Jamadar in spite of being a Muslim worships the shoes of a Hindu saint. They threw him out of the house. The helpless Jamadar took shelter in an old house outside the village. His fame spread everywhere. For sick and miserable people, who came to him, he would give the dust collected under the leather shoes of Sri Swamiji as 'Prasad' and they would get relief from their ailments. People started calling him a fully accomplished person.

Sri Swamiji started calling him *Peersaheb*[258]. Then people also started calling him *Peersaheb*. As his status ascended his family too started respecting him. He built a temple and installed the leather shoes i.e. *Padukas* of Sri Swamiji. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji Jamadar came to be known as *Awalia*[259].

**Kashikar Swami**

In Kashi[260] there was a learned Swami. He had studied the *Shastras* very deeply. He had some doubts about Vedas - regarding the soul and non-self and the science of Yoga. When he went on a pilgrimage he met a number of saints, ascetics and learned people but no one could clear his doubt.

Once, while on pilgrimage, he was in Malbar[261]. There he got a visionary intuition advising him to go to Akkalkot. At the time he wasn't even aware about the significance and whereabouts of a place called Akkalkot. After making due enquiries he started searching and finally he came reached Akkalkot. Even though he was a highly learned man well versed in the scriptures, but by the mere 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth there was a surge of devotion in his heart. His eyes started shedding tears of joy.

Kashikar Swami stayed in Akkalkot for a month. One day after finishing his bath and morning prayers he came for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. After the 'Darshan' he went on prostrating before Sri Swamiji. He would get up and again prostrate before Sri Swamiji. Nearly for ten to twelve times, he prostrated before Sri Swamiji. His eyes were shedding tears, his body was shivering, and he would get wet with perspiration. With humbleness he perceived Sri Swamiji. After sometime he sat down. Then he said that

[258] Peersaheb: A muslim saint
[259] Awalia: An accomplished muslim saint
[260] Kashi: In Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh state of India.
[261] Malbar: A region in south of India.

because of the kind grace of Sri Swamiji all his doubts got cleared. Being fully satisfied he went back after few days.

### Haribhau-Swamisut

Haribhau from Mumbai suffered loss in his business. Therefore, he vowed to make an offering to Sri Swamiji if his wish gets fulfilled. Thereafter he made good profit in his business. To keep his vow he came to Akkalkot. Sri Swamiji regarded him as his son. Sri Swamiji showered his kind grace on Haribhau and gave him the *Padukas*. Haribhau built a temple, installed the padukas, and spread the fame of Sri Swamiji.

### Siddhappa Jangam

Siddhankeri is a village near Akkalkot. There is a big Muth belonging to the Lingayat Community. A Jangam[262] Guru named Siddhappa was the chief of the Muth. The Muth was very prosperous but Jangam Siddhappa was a pure and honest devotee. He came to Akkalkot with great pomposity for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Siddhappa was fully content by the 'Darshan' of the Divine form of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji asked him "If I give you a bread can you digest the same? ". Siddhappa humbly replied "Maharaj, whatever you give with kind grace, it will be certainly digested, not only by me but also by everybody".

At that very time a shepherd was passing by. Sri Swamiji asked for bread from the shepherd and gave it to Siddhappa. In fact a Jangam swami never accepts food from anybody, except another Jangam swami. But Siddhappa Jangam ate the bread as prasad given by Sri Swamiji.

**No sooner, than he ate that bread his egoism disappeared, he lost his consciousness, and he got merged into the universal spirit. Sri Swamiji spoke to him "Now go to your temple and with undivided attention, attain divinity. Maintaining a selfless unselfish conduct and with sweet speech, give happiness to everybody". By the kind favour of Sri Swamiji Siddhappa Jangam got absorbed in the contemplation of Lord Brahma.**

### Bairamji

Sri Swamiji had been to Naldurga in Andhra Pradesh. A Parsi gentleman Bairamji was the revenue collector at the time in Naldurga. Some of his clerical staff wanted to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' and so requested officer Bairamji to grant them an hour's time off. However, Bairamji became angry and said, "You behave like uncivilised foolish people. What exactly will you gain by the 'Darshan' of a human being? One should not go crazy after saints and ascetics and worship them".

[262] Jangam: One who is moving.

The same day Sir Salarjung saheb, the Prime Minister of the then state of Hyderabad, had come to Naldurga for Sri Swamiji 'Darshan'. Along with Sir Salarjung Saheb the staff of the collector's office too took the opportunity to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. None of the staff paid any attention to Bairamji's objections.

Next day, Bairamji fired al of them. On some pretext the fired staff managed to take Bairamj for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. While taking Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' Bairamji started choking with fear and he fell down. Then Sri Swamiji spoke with anger "You fool, by your bad conduct, are you not hurting people? Is it permitted in your religion to cause censurable and fatal works causing death etc? ".

Hearing these words of Sri Swamiji Bairamji repented very much. He prayed for forgiveness, took eight days leave, and started rendering service to Sri Swamiji. He prayed to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, kindly uplift me with your kind advice". Then Sri Swamiji favoured Bairamji with the advice of virtuous conduct. After this Bairamji became a devotee of Sri Swamiji till the end.

### Manyaba

The son of a Brahmin from Maindargi village Manyaba was an orphan. He was dumb and mentally dull. Manyaba somehow carried on his life. One day the village people took Manyaba to Akkalkot and left him there at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Due to the kind favour of Sri Swamiji dumb Manyaba started speaking. He was able to talk Marathi and Kannada languages. He attained speech *siddhi*. Whatever he would say, those words would manifest in reality. People started visiting and respecting him. To get success in their ventures people started pressurising him to utter, "Speak out that the work will be done". However, he would not come under undue pressure. He would say, "Sri Swamiji will beat me, remove the skin of my buttocks and bleed me". By the kind favour of Sri Swamiji finally Manyaba became a saint.

### Saraswati Sonareen

There was a lady named Saraswati Sonareen[263]. While singing *Abhanga*[264] she would break into tears and then wander like a crazy person. Sri Swamiji had favoured her with kind grace. Whatever Sri Swamiji would speak in a mysterious way, she would understand the meaning. She would maintain herself by begging. She would feed dogs and wander everywhere. When Sri Swamiji would get angry he would never listen to anyone. At that time devotees would look for Sarswati Sonareen and Manyaba and bring them to Sri Swamiji. Seeing those two Sri Swamiji would get pleased.

Once some people from Narasinhawadi in Kolhapur, Maharashtra, had come to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. They asked Sri Swamiji "Maharaj, who are you? ". Sri Swamiji said "*Mool Purush, Vatavriksha*, *Dattanagar*". Then Saraswati Sonareen

[263] Sonareen: Woman from Goldsmith caste
[264] Abhanga: Singing of religious hymns in praise of God or Sadguru

explained the meaning of Sri Swamiji's words to those people and said "It is the original person, one who sleeps on the leaf of an Indian fig tree, has taken incarnation in the form of Lord Dattatreya". Sonareen with a fiendish behaviour possessed latent powers and hence Sri Swamiji liked her very much.

### Narasappa of Mysore

Sixty-year-old Narasappa had come to Akkalkot from Mysore to seek the kind favour of Sri Swamiji. Except Kannada he did not know any other language and so he was not able to open up his mind in front of Sri Swamiji. Unable to explain himself he would stand silently in front of Sri Swamiji with folded hands. One day, recitation of *Puran57* was in progress in the presence of Sri Swamiji. At that time Sri Swamiji hinted Narsappa to come near him. Nearby a person was writing an account. Sri Swamiji took the notebook from the person and wrote in Kannada in the notebook. "Read Bhagwadgita. Your work will get done".

Narasappa became very happy, so he started to learn how to recite the Bhagwadgita from a Shastri[265]. One night, Puranik and an ascetic were discussing about *Vedanta*. Narsappa slept at the place where this discussion was going on. At midnight he woke up. He was trembling. His eyes were shedding tears. He started saying "Sri Swami Maharaj is God Almighty". When asked he started saying, "Sri Swamiji took me to *Vaikunth*[266]. There, in the golden temple on a throne decorated with gems and jewels Lord Rama was seated glaring with splendour along with Goddess Sita, Lakshman, Bharat, Shatrughna and also Hanumanji". I prayed "Maharaj, today I am blessed by your kind grace. By your kind favour this humble man could get the blessings of Lord Rama". Narasappa sat there for a long time, as a crazy person. He had sought the kind favour of Sri Swamiji.

### Rachappa and Govind Bhat

In Tamb village of Karnatak a Brahmin named Govind Bhat lived. Hearing the fame of Sri Swamiji he came to Akkalkot. Sitting in front of Sri Swamiji he would sing devotional songs and chant the name of God. By the kind grace of Sri Swamiji Govind Bhat attained *siddhi* in speech. He became a great devotee of Sri Swamiji. Once he had been to Warli, the abode of *Lord Veer Bhadra*[267]. At Warli there was a person named Rachappa, a devotee of Lord Veer Bhadra. He was an excellent poet. However, he would not sing devotional songs in praise of any other God except Lord Veerbhadra. Govind Bhat said, "Sri Swami Samarth is the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. You chant in the praise of Sri Swamiji". However, Rachappa refused to do so. Govind Bhat felt very bad. He felt that Rachappa has insulted Sri Swamiji. Hence he came to his village Tamb, gave up food and water, and started chanting in the praise of Sri Swamiji for a week.

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[265] Shastri: One who has studied the shastras
[266] Vaikunth: The paradise of the Lord Vishnu
[267] Lord Veer Bhadra: The name of a powerful hero created by Lord Shiva, whom he ordered to destroy the Dakshayadnya

Finally Sri Swamiji appeared in Rachappa's dream and said "without showing any difference between me and Lord Veer Bhadra, start chanting devotionally in my favour. If you show any difference then you will undergo suffering. Go to Govind Bhat and request him for forgiveness". Rachappa went to Tamb village and requested Govind Bhat for forgiveness and said, "Because of you, I got the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. My entire family lineage got uplifted". Then in the praise of Sri Swamiji he composed a number of devotional songs.

### Kejkar Swami

Maharudrarao Deshpande was a *Rigvedi Brahmin* and was a *Jagirdar* of Kej village which belonged to the then Hyderbad state. The Nizam[268] seized the Jagir. However, due of the kind grace of Sri Swamiji he got the Jagir back. He even found treasure buried in his house by the kind grace of Sri Swamiji. Once he was in the jaws of death due to extreme fever but was saved by drinking 'Charanodak'.

He came to Akkalkot and prayed to Sri Swamiji "Maharaj has saved me from the jaws of death. Now kindly allow me to render devotional service". He presented an offering of rupees ten thousand to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji laughed and said, "Go home. Take this money home, throw it on a heap of rubbish and keep this stone there". Jagirdar Maharudrarao returned to his native place and built a big temple near his house and installed the *Padukas* of Sri Swamiji in that temple.

He went on a pilgrimage and accepted asceticism renouncing all worldly ties. Finally he came to Akkalkot and settled there in the proximity of Sri Swamiji. Later he came to be known as Kejkarswami. As per his wish, his Samadhi tomb was built near Sri Swamiji's samadhi.

### Bhuria Baba

In the holy place Dwaraka there was a very very old hathyogi[269] known as Bhuria Baba. He would render service to saints; help the poor and depressed people. He was completely honest, sweet spoken and always spoke the truth. Day and night he would be restless for Lord Dattatreya's 'Darshan'. Eventually he got the fruits of his devout austerity and righteous conduct. One day Sri Swamiji stood before Bhuria Baba manifesting as Lord Dattatreya and when Sri Swamiji bestowed his kind grace by placing his bountiful hand on Bhuria Baba's head, Baba lost his consciousness. Then Sri Swamiji favoured him and advised him "Now give up your 'hathyoga' and start my Naamsmaran". Baba became very happy, as his life had become fruitful.

**In this way by his kind grace Sri Swamiji had favoured a number of devotees. The devotees who had received the kind grace of Sri Swamiji**

[268] Nizam: The ruler of the then Hyderabad state
[269] Hathayogi: A person practising Hatha Yoga

**included men and women of all religions, from lunatic people to learned Shastries, from poor people to rich people and from householders to ascetics.**

## Master, Do Not Forsake Us and Leave

### Indication of Final Journey

One day, Balappa brought a *hukka* and gave it to Sri Swamiji. While smoking the *hukka* Sri Swamiji asked Balappa "We have to go very long way. We have to reach very high altitude. Would you like to come to render service to me? ". When this question was put to Balappa his heart started beating faster. He was caught in a dilemma and got worried.

Regarding his final journey Sri Swamiji would give indications in advance throughout the year. Sometimes Sri Swamiji would change the lamp upside down. He had rolled his bed and hang it on a tree. After Cholappa's death he would get dejected very often. From the day of his arrival to Akkalkot Cholappa rendered service to Sri Swamiji. Separation from Cholappa became unbearable for Sri Swamiji. Hence Sri Swamiji thought of winding up his divine incarnation. During the long life of hundreds of years Sri Swamiji had inspired thousands of people to follow the path of devotion and inclined towards the path of virtue. Sri Swamiji had raised a flag of devotion by creating thousands of devotees. Now he thought it as the right time to depart from this world.

Before the departure from this world Sri Swamiji showed one more miraculous work. He went and sat in the Jangam Muth of Akkalkot. In this Muth there is a large idol of Lord Shiva of Jangam belonging to the Lingayat community. He told the Muth's attendant to bring dry cowdung cakes and create a sacred fire on the 'Shivalinga'. In the sacred fire he put items like 10 pounds of ghee, dried dates, rice, fruits, flower garlands etc, which he had received from devotees. Seeing this act of Sri Swamiji Lingayat devotees became furious and started shouting in anger but kept silent seeing the divine form of Sri Swamiji. The sacred fire was very intense. The intense heat scorched the stone walls. However, on the next day as per the instructions of Sri Swamiji when the Shivalinga was cleansed it had become exceedingly bright and luminous than it was before. It is as though Sri Swamiji had given an indication to the devotees and disciples that even fire cannot destroy the form of individual soul. Even after getting burnt in the fire, the soul will exist in an exceedingly luminous form.

Eight days prior to the final journey Sri Swamiji started singing hymns in the praise of Lord Shiva, as "Shivahar Shankar Namami, Shankar Shivashankar Shambho, Hey Girijapati Bhavanishankar, Shiva Shankar Shambho" meaning, "I bow to you and pay my obeisance Oh! Lord Shiva-Shankar". Then Sri Swamiji went to Tatya Subhedar's house. There he suffered from dysentery. When he felt a little better he went to a village Naganhalli and took a halt in a mango-grove in the village. His health started deteriorating further. He stopped eating food. When attendant Sakharam Lokhande requested with prayers, Sri Swamiji came back to his favourite *Vatavriksha*[270] at Akkalkot. His fever had gone up. His body started aching but nobody saw Sri Swamiji

[270] Vatavriksha: Indian Fig tree

groan. Except Sundarabai none was allowed to go near him. He had already given up food. As per Sundarabai's request Sri Swamiji took two spoons of rice-gruel.

She further requested him "Maharaj, when would you become alright? ". Sri Swamiji spoke slowly "Now, how could I become alright? Time has come for me to depart from this world on my final journey".

Topmost allopathic and ayurvedic doctors were called in but Sri Swamiji would not take any medicine. If someone tried to force medicine in his mouth Sri Swamiji would spit it out immediately. His illness started increasing. Once Sundarabai enquired, "When would you become alright and get up? ". Sri Swamiji said, "I would get up alright when the mountains speak". When Sripad Bhat asked the same question then Sri Swamiji said, "I would get up when Pandharpur gets burnt up".

His disciples and devotees realized that Sri Swamiji is departing for his final journey and making them orphan. They all prayed "Maharaj, what should we do now? ". Sri Swamiji told Shripad Bhat "Keep yourself busy in digging up at the root of the Vatvriksha". Then Sri Swamiji told Ganapat rao "You remain in the temple". Then he instructed Balappa "You remain under Audumbar tree and then he instructed everybody "You follow your ancestors". Then Sri Swamiji repeated one verse from Bhagvad-Gita-

***"Ananyas Chintaye mam, Ye janah paryupasate!***

***Tesham nityabhiyuktanam, Yoga-kshemam vahamyaham*! !".**

**(BhagvadGita shloka 9/22)**

**{But those who always worship Me,**

**with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form,**

**to them, I carry what they lack and I preserve what they have. }**

Sri Swamiji was fully conscious till he completely abandoned his material body and departed on his final journey. On Chaitra Krishna Trayodashi day of Hindu year 1800 (Year 1878 as per English calendar) Sri Swamiji ate some rice-gruel. Then he was laid on a bed. All the devotees were totally depressed due to anxiety. Though time for the final journey came near Sri Swamiji's face still reflected divine splendour and seemed as lustrous as usual. There was the same delight on his face and his vision was the same as before. Devotee-servant Sripad Bhat seated Sri Swamiji by extending his physical support. Sri Swamiji sat in lotus position and got himself absorbed in supreme self. None of the devotees came to know about this.

Devotees and disciples started bewailing. It appeared as though children had lost their mother and calves had lost their mother-cow. It appeared as though mother Guru had turned away his face from his devotees. Who can describe the devotee's pain

of separation from their Guru? This news spread everywhere like wind. Devotees from every village rushed to Akkalkot. Sri Swamiji had departed making his devotees orphan.

An aeroplane made of flowers was prepared for the final journey of Sri Swamiji. Flowers were showered down on Sri Swamiji. The entire resources of Akkalkot State including elephants, horses, along with the insignia of royalty was kept ready for the final journey of Sri Swamiji. Entire mass of people started moving ahead continuously singing devotional songs to take the final Darshan of their God, Sri Swamiji.

Cholappa had kept a place ready in his house for Sri Swamiji's Samadhi. Sri Swamiji had preferred Cholappa's house to be his permanent samadhi place. This was the same place where Sri Swamiji had stayed when he had first come to Akkalkot. Nana Saheb Barve, the prime minister of then Akkalkot State and Baburao Vishnu Moghe, the Revenue collector of Akkalkot, laid Sri Swamiji's body in the Samadhi place. Devotees paid their last obeisance and took Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. Even now Sri Swamiji's face expressed the same lustre and the assurance of impunity for the devotees.

Balappa had brought and preserved a bottle of fragrant essence in his house for Sri swamiji. He had strong desire to present this bottle as an offering to Sri Swamiji. However, due to the huge crowd at the Samadhi site Balappa could not go home to get the bottle. So Balappa got extremely uneasy. In the meanwhile somebody brought the bottle and gave it to Balappa. Thus Balappa's wish got fulfilled. Sri Swamiji even after departing from the worldly existence had fulfilled the wish of his devotee. Thousands of devotees with tearful eyes and with constant repetition God's name bade farewell to Sri Swamiji.

## I Have Not Gone I Am Still Living

The Supreme Being Lord Dattatrey Himself had taken incarnation in the form of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji abandoned the physical form but the essential element did not get lost, it became formless and pervaded everywhere.

Balappa was a close devotee of Sri Swamiji. Balappa was in great pain due to the agony of separation from Sri Swamiji. He would sit in front of the Samadhi recollecting all the miraculous works of Sri Swamiji and then start crying. Four days without food and water, he continued to sit there in front of the Samadhi. At the end of the fourth day only for the sake of his favourite devotee Sri Swamiji manifested himself in front of Balappa and woke him from the slumber. Then Sri Swamiji blessed him by placing the bountiful hand Balappa's head and said "I am living, in a spirited form, in the *Paduka* given to you by me. Now I will accept your service when you worship the *Padukas*".

Kelkar Maharaj of Chiplun was also grief-stricken after the departure of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji manifested himself and gave 'Darshan' to Kelkar Maharaj. Earlier Sri Swamiji had promised Jahagirdar Bhausaheb of Neelgaon that he would come to Neelgaon. On the fifth day after his Samadhi Sri Swamiji manifested himself in Neelgaon. Soon after getting this news, Bhausaheb went to Neelgaon and had the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. Bhausaheb prayed to Sri Swamiji to come to his house but his request was refused. Sri Swamiji disappeared from Neelgaon. Bhausaheb sent his messenger to Akkalkot to search for Sri Swamiji. Before the messenger returned Sri Swamiji manifested himself in Bhausaheb's house the same afternoon itself. Bhausaheb prayed to Sri Swamiji to take food in his house but without saying a word Sri Swamiji disappeared. Later when Bhausaheb learnt that Sri Swamiji had already taken Samadhi and he had manifested himself in Neelgaon just to keep up his promise, his eyes started shedding tears realizing the extent of love of Sri Swamiji towards his devotees. **Even after taking Samadhi Sri Swamiji had given his 'Darshan' to numerous devotees. Even today Sri Swamiji gives 'Darshan' to his devotees.**

**He had said, "I have not gone, I am still living".**

**The Lord is infinite. The tales of incarnations and miracles are also infinite. Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj, the incarnation of the Supreme Being Lord Dattatreya, was also infinite. The tales of incarnations and miracles of Sri Swamiji are also infinite. The miraculous works of Sri Swamiji still continues to date. When you merge deep in the water of devotion only then would one understand the profound nature of the miraculous works of Sri Swamiji. Unless you get completely drenched in the devotion you would not experience the mystifying aspect of Sri Swamiji. The one who gets into deep waters and explores finds pearls. The fool, who is afraid of drowning in the water, would always remain sitting on the riverbank.**

## What Is The Measure Of Splendour Of The Lord !

Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, had manifested Himself in a human form and carried out miraculous works. He was Superhuman. His lustre was divine and brilliant. He was blessed with long arms extending up to his knees. Such lustre of divine brilliance was being emitted from his body, that none could look at him directly. He was white-complexioned. He had a straight long nose. He had curved eyebrows, long ears, broad chest, thighs like banana-tree, and lotus like feet. He had sandal mark on his forehead and his arms.

He would wear loincloth. It might be right to say that the attendants themselves clothed Sri Swamiji with a loincloth. Sometimes Sri Swamiji would remove and throw away the loincloth and get naked. Sometimes he would wear an ear cap; sometimes he would wear a red-ochre costume. Sri Swamiji would always look very graceful. The nature of Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj, Lord Dattatrey incarnate, was very simple and straightforward. He was like a child. He was very generous, very kind to the devotees and always showered love towards his devotees. Mentally he was not narrow-minded. He would treat everyone equally without any difference. His kindness was showered equally on everybody like a king or a beggar, a small child or an old person, a woman or a man, a Hindu or a Muslim, a *Varkari* or a Lingayat, a Brahmin or a Shudra.

Sri Swamiji would get very happy on seeing the love of the devotees, but by seeing the worldly ailments like arrogance, hypocrisy, injustice, and immorality etc, he would get unhappy and very angry. From his heart, Sri Swamiji wished welfare of all devotees, but if he sees any devotee getting degraded due to misdeeds then he would punish the degraded devotee by becoming heartless. However, if any devotee repents on his wrongful action then Sri Swamiji would forgive him. Sri Swamiji was very tolerant. Whatever his attendants would do Sri Swamiji would endure in silence. For example Sri Swamiji bore with tolerance the actions in excess of Sundarabai.

For Sri Swamiji the earth and gold were alike. He would sometimes sleep on a bed and at times on stone, sometimes there would be the insignia of royal with elephants and horses but sometimes he would sit on a heap of rubbish. He would sometimes take bath a number of times in a day but sometimes for eight days he would not take bath at all.

He would sometimes be sitting in the house of a Brahmin and at times in the locality of *Shudras*. He would sometimes be staying in a Palace but sometimes on the verandah of a temple. He would sometimes be sleeping on a cot and sometimes in a pit. In all locations and under all circumstances he would be absorbed in himself.

Sri Swami Samarth was an ocean of knowledge. The pride of all learned persons and reputed scholars would sink in the presence of Sri Swami Samarth. He would place his bountiful hand on the head of a boy or a crazy person and cause him to recite the stanzas from the Vedas, the Upanishad, and the Bhagvad Geeta. The secret meaning of the Vedas would also get revealed in the presence of Sri Swami Samarth.

Sri Swamiji was temperate in speech. Occasionally he liked to adopt silence. He would speak in Marathi. Sometimes Sri Swamiji would speak out Sanskrit dictums. Out of fun or anger Sri Swamiji would speak out in Hindi language. He was very outspoken. He would shower abuses. Whether a person is rich, honourable or even a woman, Sri Swamiji would speak openly and clearly and expose them stark naked if necessary. His speech would be either indicative or symbolic. Sri Swamiji, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, had the power by which he was able to do and undo things. He would fill up water in a dried well and cure the most incurable diseases in no time. He would make a poor man rich. He would prevent death and revive dead body. All accomplishments stood before him with folded hands (i.e. All the *siddhis* bowed before him). Sri Swamiji was an ancient person. The Supreme Lord of the ancient Hindu mythology had manifested in the form of Sri Swami Samarth. As per the opinion of people of the same period he was an aged ascetic with a very long life. In this form he would manifest himself anywhere, anytime and protect the devotees and give them advice too. The inner-spirited Sri Swamiji would appear himself in the dreams of the devotees and bless them with visionary intuition.

**In the form of Sri Swami Samarth, the attribute-less Supreme Lord Himself, had manifested with attributes. The Supreme Lord himself had incarnated as God and descended on this earth. How could one describe the infinite attributes of the Lord?**

**"Sab Dharati Kagaj Karo.**
**Lekhani karo Banray!**
**Sat Samundarki Masi karoo,**
**Guru Gan likha na jay!".**

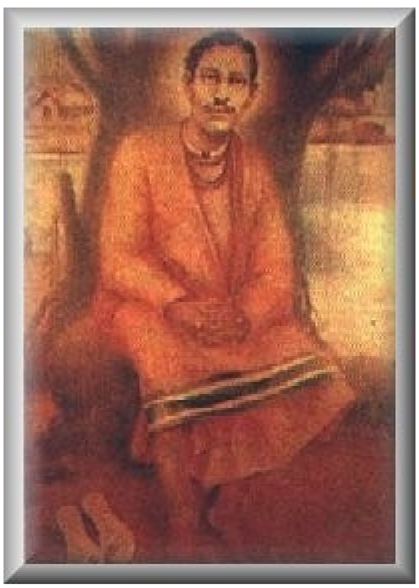
**(Let us make the whole world as paper and make entire forest as a pen. Let us make the seven seas as ink. Even then we will not be able to write entirely the attributes of our Guru- Sri Swami Samarth)**

**In the incarnation of Sri Swami Samarth the entire lustre, power and attributes had manifested. That is indescribable. You can only experience this with full devotion.**

## Sadguru's Choice of Primary Disciples

Akkalkot Nivasi Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj had initiated a number of devotees and made them disciples. Out of these known-unknown numerous disciples, the primary disciples who got the blessing-symbol from Sri Swamiji returned to their own places and fluttered the banner representing devotional loyalty to Sri Swamiji. They are as follows.

### Swamisut



In Itiya village belonging to Ratnagiri District Swamisut was born to the 'Khot' family. His name was Hanbhau Tawade Khot. It was a prosperous house. For his education he came to Mumbai. After finishing his education he joined the Mumbai Municipality for employment. Gajanan Khatri was his co-worker at the time. Both joined hands and started doing some speculation in the opium business. They suffered heavy losses. They got into heavy debts. Hence both of them went to Laxman Pandit whom they knew. Laxman Pandit was a family priest of Govindrao's house. Govindrao was the same person whose cook Kanojia Brahmin, by the kind favour of Sri Swami Samarth, had unexpectedly received Rupees ten thousand as charitable donation from the *Sethani* (Govindrao's wife).

Laxman Pandit was also in debt. When he heard the surprising story about Kanojia Brahmin he took a vow to come to Akkalkot for Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan' if his burden of debt gets cleared within eight days. By this time both, Haribhau and Khatri had reached Laxman Pandit's residence and requested him that, if he stood as a guarantor for their loan debt then he would be able to get equal share in profit, if any, in their business venture. When Haribhau and Khatri heard the story of Kanojia Brahmin from Pandit, they both got very impressed. Soon a miracle took place in their business. Pandit made a profit of rupees two thousand from the business. Haribhau and Khatri also got freed from their debt and further they also made some profit. All the three took a vow that, till they go to Akkalkot and take the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji; they will not accept any food.

When they reached Akkalkot Sri Swamiji was in the palace. Sri Swamiji had just taken food and was resting. Cholappa took Sri Swamiji's partly finished food platter and was on his way back, when Haribhau begged for the portion of the food tasted by Sri

Swamiji. Haribhau ate the same with love. When all the three went inside the palace where Sri Swamiji was resting and took his 'Darshan', Sri Swamiji spoke "You started business and suffered a loss. You took a vow and made profit. Now go away". Hearing this all the three were surprised and at the same time overwhelmed with joy.

When they all went on the second day for the 'Darshan', Sri Swamiji looked at Pandit and said, "you put on a turban on your head". Then he spoke to Khatri "You go to the market and tie a dhotee on your head". Finally, he spoke to Haribhau "You sacrifice your family and become my son, Go now and come back with white - white thing". Haribhau was perplexed and did not understand the meaning of the 'white-white' thing. Later on, he came to know that Sri Swamiji had asked him to bring the Padukas (foot Prints) made of white silver. Later on, they offered 'Naivedya' to Sri Swamiji and returned to Mumbai.

After coming back to Mumbai Haribhau started getting mentally depressed with regards to his family life and he started to see Sri Swamiji idol everywhere he looked. With strong desire he started yearning for the kind favour of Sri Swamiji in his heart. As Sri Swamiji's order he prepared the silver Padukas and came to Akkalkot. Sri Swamiji wore those Padukas for fourteen days. Every devotee was strongly desirous of getting those Padukas. Eventually, Sri Swamiji announced, "This is my *Atmalinga*[271]. I will not give this to anybody". Sri Swami Samarth called Haribhau and spoke to him "Give up your occupation and become my son. On the bank of the ocean, build up a fort and hoist my flag". Then Sri Swamiji took the Padukas, touched his entire body with the Padukas, and then bestowed on Haribhau those sacred Padukas.

One night Haribhau woke up from sleep, got up, and started rendering service to Sri Swami Samarth. There were secret talks between the two. Sri Swamiji threw his clothes on Haribhau and said, "Dispose off your entire household in charity". Haribhau obeyed with great reverence the orders of his Guru. He wore the red-ochre dress and returned to Mumbai holding the Padukas close to and touching his heart. As per the orders of Sri Swamiji he gave away all his material possessions in charity. He had 800-900 grams of gold in his house. He sold it and gave the money in charity to the Brahmins. His wife Tarabai started crying but Haribhau did not pay any attention. He kept a *Kafani*[272]for himself and a white saree for his wife. Then he got himself deeply absorbed in singing hymns in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth. His wife was crying and wailing but he made her listen to the following song:

"*Now Tara, you take up singing hymns in the praise of Sri Swami,*

*Hold this 'Ekatari' (one stringed musical instrument) in your hand,*

*Start singing in the praise of Sri Swami Samarth by concentrating your attention at the lotus feet of Sri Swami*".

[271] Atmalinga: Symbol of Self. An embodiment of a supreme entity's divine presence.
[272] Kafani: A long robe worn by mendicants

Haribhau built a Temple of Sri Swami Samarth at Kamathipura, Mumbai and he absorbed himself in worshipping and singing hymns in the praise of Sri Swamiji. He started calling himself Swamisut. Thousands of people of all religions started coming to his Muth for his blessings. Swamisut's fame started spreading everywhere. Later on this Muth was shifted to Kandewadi, Mumbai.

Swamisut came to Akkalkot 2 to 4 times a year. Once when he reached Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji was in the Queen's palace. They did not allow anybody to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'. However, Swamisut was earnestly longing for the 'Darshan'. So standing at the palace gate he started singing:

"My mother, since it is your house, I have come to the door. I do not want anything! Only show me the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji!"

Seeing Swamisut's distress the Queen allowed him to take Sri Swamiji's 'Darshan'.

Once when Swamisut had come to Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji said, "Now I am going to wind up my incarnation. You carry the flag and look after my seat". Hearing these words Swamisut became very much displeased. He did not agree with the fact of separating forever from his Sadguru Sri Swamiji, before his very own eyes. Feeling very much offended; he went back to Mumbai and fell sick. To bring him back to Akkalkot Sri Swamiji sent Shiubai and also sent Sripad Bhat. Sri Swamiji even gave order to capture Swamisut and bring him to Akkalkot. However, Swamisut did not budge an inch from his decision. Finally Sri Swamiji got disappointed and said; "Now if he fails to come, I will blow up that cottage. I have kept ready, a battle front of cannons".

Due to the very thought of the separation from his Sadguru, which had caused him intense grief, Swamisut gave up his existence from this world. Sri Swamiji also was becoming restless doe to the separation from his son Swamisut. Later, Sri Swamiji initiated Swamisut's younger brother Dada alias Babu and got him seated in the place of Swamisut at Mumbai. Later on, Babu became known as 'Sachhidanand Swamikumar'.

**Deo Mamaledar**

Yashwantrao Bhosekar was a *mamlatdar128*. When he was in Parner, he developed a strong desire to get the 'Darshan' and blessings of a Sadguru. He was virtuous, fully devoted, and ever desirous for a Sadguru. Sri Swami Samarth manifested Himself in his dream in an *Ajanubahu*[273] form and ordered Yashwantrao to come to Him for his 'Darshan'.

During those days, Sri Swamiji resided in Mangalvedha and therefore, Yashwantrao went there. When he met the great lustrous personality of Sri Swamiji, he immediately recognized that it was the same person in his dream that had blessed him with visionary intuition. He prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and remained clinged on to his feet. Sri Swamiji placed his hand Yashwantrao's forehead, blessed him and said "wait, I will open up your past memory". Yashwantrao enjoyed the perception of being absorbed into the Supreme Spirit. Sri Swamiji patted Yahawantrao with love and said, "Today, you are repeating the name of god constantly. But when the past memories are revived, people themselves will start calling you as God". Sri Swamiji blessed him and gave a *Shaligram*[274]*.* Yashwantrao later paid his obeisance by washing the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and worshipped him before returning back to his hometown.

Deo Mamaledar never compensated with truth during his service. He tried to experience the presence of God in every human being, right from a peon up to an officer and further even up to the level of a prisoner. He always maintained his family within the small limited income he earned. Sometimes he borrowed money, but he never accepted any bribe. Four children took birth in his family but each child died within a period of three months. He consoled himself and his family saying that God granted these children in his family and took them all away too. **He always helped beggars, saints, mendicants, helpless women as well as children who came to his door as if they were his own.**

**While going to work, if he ever saw any hungry person he would immediately arrange for their food. Similarly, if he met any sick person, he would arrange for their medicines. If he saw any unclaimed body lying on the streets, he would immediately arrange for the funeral of that body by spending money from his own pocket. If he ever found any cart-man beating up his bulls, he would go for their rescue and say, "Do not beat God". His heart was filled with boundless compassion.**

**Once he was the taluka Magistrate of Satana near Nasik. During the year 1870-71, there was dreadful famine in Satana. The animals started to die of hunger. People started becoming restless through pain and dehydration. In that situation, Deo Mamaledar sold all the gold ornaments as well as costly**

[273] Ajanubahu: One with long arms that reach upto the knees
[274] Shaligram: A black stone worshipped as God Vishnu

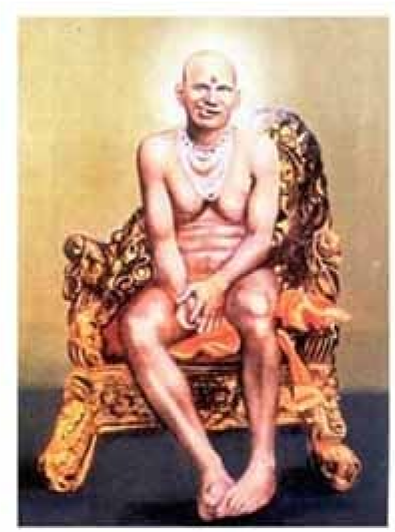
**items of his house and helped the needy. Finding it unbearable to see the sufferings of the people. He became so restless that he went to his office, took the keys to the Government Treasury, and distributed a handful of money amongst the thousands of needy people. The people gave their solemn blessings and went away, but his senior officer was highly surprised. The Deputy Collector came for inquiry, but it was a miracle that the treasury was not short even by a single penny.**

**Highly overcome with intense emotions due to this incident, Deo Mamaledar went home and bowed his head in front of the Shaligram given to him by Sri Swamiji. Suddenly a miracle took place and Lord Vishnu himself appeared in front of him in place of the Shaligram. Deo Mamaledar was filled with joy and said "Oh! Lord Vishnu! Oh! The Lord of the Universe! What a miracle this is! How much troubles have you taken for a petty man like me? ".**

After this divine visit, Deo Mamaledar resigned from his service. He crossed and went beyond all worldly boundaries. He moved from Satara to Nasik and began resolving difficulties of the devotees there. He stayed there unfurling the flag of devotion. It is said that Sri Swamiji had sent Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon after duly initiating him to Deo Mamaledar in Nasik for a few days.

**Deo Mamaledar was a great saint. He was extremely compassionate, which was rare to find sometimes even in God. He left this world in the year 1887.**

**Srikrishna Saraswati-Kumbhar Swami**



A Brahmin named Appa Bhat Joshi lived in Nandani Village, Kolhapur District. His wife's name was 'Annapurna'. He was very satisfied with his life and decided to go to *Nrusinhawadi Dattakshetra*[275], to render devotional service. Dattaguru, Himself appeared in his dream as a Brahmin and blessed him saying, "I will myself take birth in this world through your wife, Annapurna."

During the year 1835, Srikrishna took birth in Nandani village. The astrologer prepared the horoscope and said, "This child will become a great saint. People may consider him as a mad person, but he will become an emancipator to this world. He will remain a bachelor and lead people on the right path".

During his childhood, Srikrishna was very mischievous and often disappointed his mother with his childish pranks. To make him wise a thread ceremony was conducted, but they still did not see any improvement in his nature. One day Srikrishna went alone to a place called Maugasuli to visit and take blessings of the family deity, *Khandoba*[276]. At Maugasuli he vowed not to intake any food until he gets the actual 'Darshan' of Lord Khandoba in indisputable real form. Impressed with the true devotion of this little boy, Lord Khandoba manifested Himself in front of Srikrishna. Lord Khandoba placed His bountiful hands on the head of Srikrishna and said, "You are none other than a part of me. Lord Dattatrey Himself has incarnated as Sri Swami Samarth in Akkalkot, so go and take the 'Darshan' of Sri swami Samarth".

When Srikrishna reached Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji took hold of his little hands and guided him into a deep forest. There, Sri Swamiji initiated Srikrishna and blessed him. Srikrishna went into absolute trance continuously for seven days after initiation. Sri Swamiji then awakened him from this trance and instructed him to go to Kolhapur and settle there. During his stay with Sri Swamiji, he gave Srikrishna a 'prasad' of the sweetmeat prepared from 'Choorma'.

A Brahmin suffering from leprosy was rendering devotional service to Lord Dattatrey at the holy place of Ganagapur. He had a visionary intuition and therefore came to Akkalkot to take blessings from Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji then ordered him saying, "You must accompany Srikrishna to Kolhapur and render service to Srikrishna. Your mental wish will be fulfilled then". The leper Brahmin thus accompanied Srikrishna to Kolhapur and stayed there to render service to him. Srikrishna later liberated him from the disease of leprosy.

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[275] Nrusinhawadi Dattakshetra: A holy place of Lord Dattatreya
[276] Khandoba: another name of Lord Shiva.

Srikrishna Sarswati Maharaj, just like Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj carried out miraculous plays, which appeared like mischievous childish pranks with demoniac possession. Since Srikrishna Saraswati Maharaj resided in Kumbhar Lane, he was later known as Kumbhar Swami.

A Brahmin had vowed that he would make an offering to Sri Swamiji if he got a son in his family. When the Brahmin got a son, he could not go to Akkalkot in time for offering *Pedhas* to Sri Swamiji. By that time Sri Swamiji had taken his Samadhi. The Brahmin repented upon hearing this, but Sri Swamiji Himself appeared in his dream and said, "I am present at Kolhapur in the form of Lord Hanuman and staying at Kumbhar Lane in the name of Srikrishna Saraswati. You can complete your vow of offering by visiting him." The Brahmin was very much pleased and went to Kolhapur. He took the 'Darshan' of Srikrishna Swami and offered the *Pedhas*. The Brahmin was confused as to why Sri Swamiji had mentioned that he would be present at Kolhapur in the form of Lord Hanuman. Understanding his mental dilemma, Srikrishna Saraswati turned his back and showed his tail.

Kumbhar Swami took Samadhi in the year 1900. His Temple shrine is located at Gangavesh, Kolhapur.

### Vamanbua Vamorikar (Badodekar)

Vamanbua was born in the village of Vamori, Ahmednagar District in Maharashtra. He was completely absorbed in the contemplation of Brahma. From early childhood he had a great desire to achieve the ultimate goal, the divine truth. He wandered to a number of places to get associated with ascetics and saints. He worked as a teacher and also worked in a press. Hearing the fame of Sri Swami Samarth of Akkalkot he became very restless for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. When Vamabua went to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji, Sri Swami Samarth gave him 'Darshan' in the form of Lord Dattatrey. Vamanbua prostrated and clung to the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. He worshipped Sri Swamiji, offered 'Naivedya' and then fed Sri Swamiji with his own hands.

Very much pleased, Sri Swamiji blessed Vamanbua with *Mahamantra*[277] and also favoured him with the religious book of *Avadhoot Geeta*[278]*.* Sri Swamiji said, "You give me your bundle of things (package) and render devotional service. You will attain the stage of *Brahmanishtha*". With these orders from Sri Swamiji, Vamanbua offered everything he possessed at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji and wore a *langoti*. Along with his mother, he went to Sardar Sriman Ghorpade at Baroda and stayed there until the end.

Due to the strength of his accomplishment, Vamanbua soon attained the stage of Brahmanishtha. He stayed at Baroda and hence was later known as Badodekar. Vamanbua wrote a book covering the life miracles of Sri Swamiji called as 'Guruleelamrit'. This book is considered highly worthy for worship by the devotees of Sri Swami Samarth. After coming to Baroda, Vamanbua's health started to deteriorate. He started suffering from diseases like cough, urinary problems, piles, and rheumatism in the joints. He took all sorts of medical treatments, but none of them were useful. The pain kept increasing. He then prayed to Sri Swamiji by sending a letter but did not receive any reply in time. The pain in his body increased to such an intolerable extent that Vamanbua while performing *Pranayam* decided to end his life in the Sursagar water tank.

One night he went to the bank of Sursagar water tank. Mentally reciting the name of Sri Swamiji when he was about to jump in the water, Sri Swamiji manifested himself in front of him and pulled Vamanbua from the water. He slapped him and said, "You fool, in-spite of the long life you wish to die? **One has to undergo all the sufferings predetermined by their fate**. Instead of preferring Sahaj-samadhi[279] why would you prefer *Jalsamadhi*[280]?. Is this your only Divine knowledge?". By saying so, Sri Swamiji took Vamanbua to his home and then disappeared. With his kind favour of Sri Swamiji, Vamanbua's hopes were kindled and he had a very good deep sleep that night.

[277] Mahamantra: The great Mantra, a sacred hymn of the deities
[278] Avadhoot Geeta: A sacred poem on the Incarnation of Lord Dattatrey
[279] Sahaj-samadhi: Contemplating the highest state of meditation and attain unity with the Absolute
[280] Jalasamadhi: Self-immolation by drowning oneself in the water

Slowly and steadily, all his diseases started getting cured. After this, when he went to Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji roared at him "Bua, are you that same person who wanted to give up his life in the Sursagar water tank?". Vamanbua felt ashamed and prayed for forgiveness. After this event, Vamanbua renounced everything and became an ascetic. He built a temple of Sri Swamiji at Baroda. He took samadhi during the year 1901.

### Nana Rekhi

Nana Rekhi of Ahmednagar was a great astrologer of his time. He was familiar with the language of owls and hence he was known as 'Pingala Astrologer'. Once when Nana Rekhi was visiting Mumbai, he had the privilege of meeting Saint Swamisut. Since then he had a strong desire to go to Akkalkot. Therefore, later he went to Akkalkot with his wife. Sri Swamiji was sitting in a *Dargah* at the time. **When they prostrated at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji to pay their obeisance, his wife Sakhu remembered her past life and Sri Swamiji gave her 'Darshan' in the form of a Balyogi who had manifested Himself from the pillar of Chelikheda in her past life.**

Upon meeting them, Sri Swamiji said, "Make my horoscope and also read my palm". Rekhi prepared the horoscope and immediately presented the same with due respect to Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji then ordered Rekhi to throw that horoscope in the loft. At that moment, there were *Bhajans* in progress at the temple. Once the Bhajans were over, they brought the horoscope from the loft and opened it. It now contained *Haladi-Kumkum*[281] as well as *Akshata*. Sri Swamiji then agreed with the horoscope and ordered to play the large kettledrum. This was a great respect for Nana Rekhi. **Sri Swamiji placed his hand on the right hand of Rekhi and displayed the Vishnupad[282] in blue colour on his palm. This mark remained on his palm until the end. Sri Swamiji then said, "I have given you my Atmalinga. You may go now."**

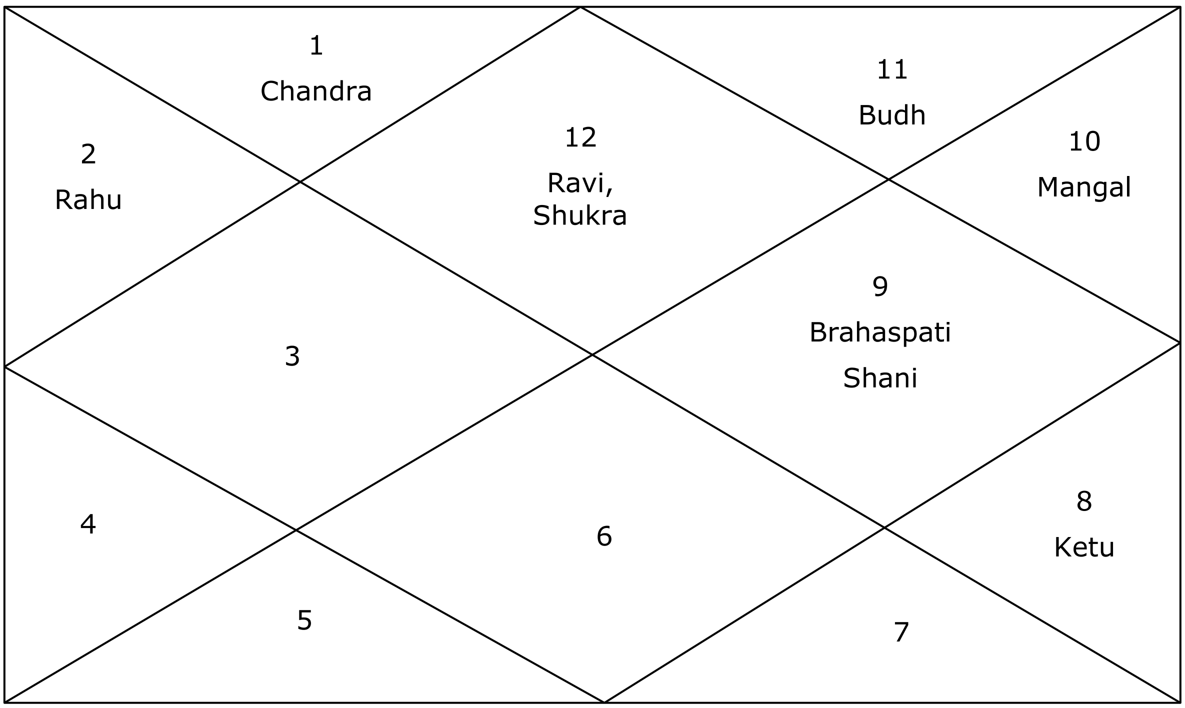
**Nana Rekhi attained *Vaaksiddhi*[283].** He had also received the Charna- Paduka' worn by Sri Swamiji. After coming back to Ahmednagar, he built a Temple and installed those *charmapadukas*. The learned Pandits of the region raised an objection to this and harassed Nana Rekhi to a very great extent. However, due to the kind mercy of Sri Swamiji, all opposition cooled down. **Sri Swamiji manifested Himself in the form of Adimata[284] and showered blessings on Nana Rekhi.**

Nana Rekhi performed a number of religious sacrifices. In the end he renounced everything and finally took Samadhi. **During his entire lifetime, he held the banner of devotion for Sri Swamiji. Nana Rekhi was able to predict future events**

[281] Haladi-Kumkum: Turmeric powder and red powder. Considered auspicious and are used in sacred and religious ceremonies.
[282] Vishnupad: The lotus foot of Lord Vishnu
[283] Vaaksiddhi: A superhuman power that turns everything a person says into truth or reality
[284] Adimata: Goddess Parvati. Divine consort of Lord shiva

**without any errors. All the important people and even some Europeans called upon him to know about their future. He had prepared the horoscope of Sri Swami Samarth in a matter of minutes and it was approved completely by Sri Swamiji. The horoscope is shown below-**

**<u>The Horoscope Of AkkalkotNiwasi Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj</u>**




**JANMAKAL (TIME OF BIRTH): - Bahudhanya Samvatsara - 1071**

**Chaitra Shuddha Dweetiya, Ashwini Nakshatra, Dwitiya Charan, Preeti Yog,**

**Time: - Two Ghatikas before Sunrise (48 minutes before Sunrise)**

**Name :- Nrusimhabhan,**

**Aadya Nadi, Dev Gana, Mesh Rashi (Aries Zodiac)**

**Rashi Swami:- Mangal**

**JanmaNaam :-Chaitanya Swami**

**Yajurvedi Brahmin, Kashyap Gotra (lineage)**

**(The original copy of this horoscope is preserved in the - 'Rekhi Muth'at Ahmednagar)**

**Note—In the horoscope, the sign of the Zodiac is shown as Mesha (Aries) But Sri Swamiji had often stated his sign of Zodiac, as 'Meena' (Pisces). It is highly possible that Sri Swamiji wanted to state the Meena Rashi (Pisces) itself as the Lagna Rashi (Sign of Zodiac).**

Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj manifested Himself in Akkalkot at the City gate on Ashwin Shuddha Panchami, Shake 1779 (Year 1856) and stayed there till Chaitra shuddha Trayodashi Shake 1800 (year 1877), for approximately 21 years. During these twenty-one years, his arrangements were first handled by Cholappa and then by Sundarabai. Towards the end the jurors managed it.

## Cholappa

On his arrival at Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji remained at the City gate for 3-4 days with his childish behaviour. The commander of cavalry present at the City gate took Sri Swamiji as a crazy person and tried to make fun of him. He gave him a small smoking pipe without tobacco along with fire to start the smoke. To his surprise, when he saw smoke coming out of the empty smoking pipe he understood that the concerned person (Sri Swamiji) has to be a great saint. Hence he immediately told about this to Cholappa who stayed nearby and asked him to prepare food for Sri Swamiji. From then on, Sri Swamiji started staying with Cholappa in his house.

Cholappa firmly believed that Sri Swamiji was a great saint and hence he obediently attended Sri Swamiji and took good care of him. However, Sri Swamiji put Cholappa to real test by troubling his wife, Yesubai and his children, Krishnappa and Appa. Sri Swamiji would pick the grains from their house and feed the cows. He would pick up cooked food and give it away to some beggar. He would relax anywhere in the house. He would childishly extinguish a burning hearth. Because of these acts from Sri Swamiji, Yesubai considered him as a mad-man and also cursed Cholappa for giving him such importance. In spite of all these hindrances, his towards Sri Swamiji grew by each day. One day when Sri Swamiji started from his home, Cholappa also followed him. Sri Swamiji spoke in anger, "I am an ascetic. Do not follow me. Go home and take care of your family". Nevertheless, Cholappa earnestly replied, "I will give up my home and hearth, but I will not give up your lotus feet". Impressed with his devotion, Sri Swamiji blessed him and gave him Padukas for worshipping.

Cholappa started worshipping the Padukas given by Sri Swamiji. Many people facing difficulties in life started to visit and get blessings. Cholappa started getting donations and monetary gifts from these devotees. The King of Akkalkot also became a devotee of Sri Swamiji and started providing for food and other necessities on a daily basis. He also provided for a five rupee monetary gift on a monthly basis to Cholappa. Soon Cholappa began to get some relief from his poverty. Sri Swamiji started visiting other devotees at their houses and accepted the food offered by these devotees as 'naivedya'. Even after this progress, Sri Swamiji troubled Cholappa's family members in a number of ways. However, Cholappa always maintained his loyalty and devotion towards Sri Swamiji.

With the increase in the fame of Sri Swamiji, they brought a lady named Sundarabai for rendering service to Sri Swamiji. Sundarabai was hard working and took control of everyone around with her sweet talks. She complained against Cholappa to the Queen of Akkalkot and arranged for his removal from the service of Sri Swamiji. Until this time, Cholappa had made thousands of rupees in his service to Sri Swamiji. Nevertheless, even Sri Swamiji was now annoyed due to his greed for money. One day when Sri Swamiji was relaxing in Khasbaug, a big crowd of devotees had gathered for is 'Darshan'. Sri Swamiji made a small pouch from a piece of cloth and started repeating *Alakh*[285]. This word is normally used by Gosavis when they beg for alms. The devotees

[285] Alakh : Name of Brahma, the creator of universe.

immediately offered their charitable alms in the pouch for Sri Swamiji. When an amount of about one hundred twenty five rupees was collected, Sri Swamiji threw the pouch towards Cholappa and said “Cholappa, take this money. I am now freed from your debts”.

Over time, Sundarbai was able to establish her domination by her service and tactfulness. She was able to remove Cholappa from his service. But Cholappa was still given permissions to visit and take the ‘Darshan’ of Sri Swamiji. Initially, he was a very poor man but he had become rich due to the kind blessings of Sri Swamiji. His twelve years of service at the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji had borne good fruits and brought him prosperity. However, he was deprived of rendering service to Sri Swamiji due to his greed. Sri Swamiji visited him during his last moments. In fact, Sri Swamiji was very unhappy by the death of Cholappa. Sri Swamiji said, “We were associated for the past seven lives and today I am freed from that bond”. Cholappa was one of the favourite devotees of Sri Swamiji.

**Sundarabai**

After Cholappa, Sundarabai took over the management of all affairs related to the service of Sri Swamiji. Cholappa had called in for Sundarabai as a helping hand. Sundarabai was a resident of Sholapur and came to Akkalkot for rendering service to Sri Swamiji. When Cholappa requested permission from Sri Swamiji to let Sundarabai give him a helping hand, Sri Swamiji had already predicted, "Cholappa, do not give this work to her. She will give you pain", But Cholappa took this remark as a joke and delegated work to Sundarabai. Eventually, she was able to take care of most of Sri Swamiji's needs such as taking him to the lavatory, giving bath, dressing him, and feeding him food etc.

Thus she exerted her dominance on everybody. With her habit of backbiting, she sent away Cholappa and prevented Balappa from taking the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. She started collecting all the offerings and monetary gifts from the devotees. Sri Swamiji had to bear this highhandedness of Sundarabai. She also started extorting money from the devotees who visited for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. She wore very old torn sarees and requested money for purchasing a new saree from the devotees. She also sometimes compelled Sri Swamiji to sleep or wake up.

Sundarabai snatched away all offerings whether it be money, sweet meats or fruits that were offered by the devotees to Sri Swamiji. Once she snatched away twenty-five rupees that a devotee offered to Sri Swamiji. When Sri Swamiji told her to give that money to Cholappa, she started to evade. At last Sri Swamiji slapped her with a shoe thrice on her head and only then she threw the money away. She later brought her family members and let them stay in the temple. She became so arrogant that when a devotee offered pomegranate to Sri Swamiji, she peeled and fed her grandson first and then fed Sri swamiji with the remains fallen on the floor. Fed up with her greed and highhandedness, the devotees started complaining about her. But she had fully influenced the Queen and no one paid any attention to these complaints. At last, the devotees complained to the Collector, who investigated the case and forcibly removed Sundarabai from the service of Sri Swamiji.

Sundarabai was very virtuous and fortunate to get the golden opportunity of serving Sri Swamiji for a number of years. This is a classic example of how greed and temptation can make a person blind and arrogant. Sundarabai, with the strength of her service to Sri Swamiji managed to take over the control and collected a number of material things. However, even after being so close to the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself, she failed to use his blessings for her own spiritual upliftment.

Policemen were called over to remove her from the service of Sri Swamiji. They seized everything from Sundarabai's room such as money, clothing, grains, sweets etc. Thus ended the authority of Sundarabai and the government finally decided to appoint a Jury of five members for the service of Sri Swamiji. Sundarabai later repented for her deeds, but did not give up her devotion towards Sri Swamiji. She was able to render service to Sri Swamiji again during his last few days.

## Balappa Maharaj

Balappa was one of the most favourite devotees of Sri Swami Samarth. He had a long association with Sri Swamiji and was one of his most faithful attendants.

Balappa was a Yajurvedi Brahmin. He came from Haveri village, Dharwad District in Karnatak State and belonged to a rich family with a money-lending business. It was a very flourishing house and fully prosperous with all comforts available. But Balappa was detached from all this prosperity and became restless to meet a Guru. One day, he suddenly abandoned his home and went in search of a Guru. First he went to Murgoad and took blessings from the renowned Chidambarswami, who was the incarnation of Lord Shiva. From there, he went to Ganagapur, Karnatak.

He initiated the performance of religious ceremonies at Ganagapur. Early at dawn, he would bathe at the Sangam and worship until midday. He would then collect cooked food given as alms and eat. He continued such severe worship for two months and rendered service to Nrusimha Saraswati, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey. He then had a visionary insight in his dream where a Brahmin told him to go to Akkalkot. When he woke up he found a small letter under his pillow stating not to rush.

Because of his deep asceticism and rigorous devout austerity, there was an awakening of likeness in the heart of Balappa regarding all living beings, including man, animals, insects, worms etc. One day he found a poisonous scorpion under his dhotee, but he opted not to kill it. On the same day, Sri Swamiji made a Divine appearance in his dreams. Next day, when he went to collect alms, he received *Puranpoli*[286] from every house he visited. He regarded this incident as an auspicious sign and immediately started his journey to visit Sri Swamiji. After walking for some distance he felt heaviness in his legs, but he kept chanting the Divine name of Sri Swami Samarth and the heaviness in his legs disappeared such that he could walk comfortably and complete his journey.

Sri Swamiji was in Khasbaug, when Balappa reached Akkalkot. Balappa offered a little sugar candy to Sri Swamiji and took his blessings. Balappa realised that the lustrous Divine figure that had visited him in his dream was none other than Sri Swamiji. He prostrated and embraced the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji. Sri Swamiji too was delighted to see this deserving disciple and embraced a nearby tree, hopping and skipping out of joy. Balappa started to stay in the Muralidhar temple. Sri Swamiji would sometimes stay at the palace during those days. Balappa went to the palace to visit Sri Swamiji for his blessings and very soon became an attendant of Sri Swamiji.

Initially, Sundarabai delegated him the task of cleaning the smoking pipe and apparatus. He completed that task sincerely. Eventually, he was slowly delegated more

[286] Puranpoli: A sweet stuffed pancake generally prepared on important ceremonies and festivals.

tasks such as making Sri Swamiji's bed, heating water, making sandalwood paste and even cooking food at times.

One day, Sri Swamiji distributed some *Prasad* of dried dates to everybody around, but did not give any to Balappa. Therefore, Cholappa put two dried dates in Balappa's hand but Sri Swamiji snatched them immediately. Balappa felt very bad, but after a few days Sri Swamiji took out a piece of sugar candy from his own mouth and gave it to Balappa. Balappa ate it immediately to prevent it from being snatched away again. Sri Swamiji burst into laughter**.**

Balappa was a keen believer of untouchability. Sri Swamiji did not approve this quality in Balappa. Therefore, Sri Swamiji asked him to fetch water from a house that was mourning a death in the family. **When there is mental purity, there is no need for external purity.**

Balappa observed severe asceticism, but he was not able to concentrate. Once Sri Swamiji forcibly struck him with his fist on his (Balappa's) back and Balappa's mental contemplation immediately disappeared. Observing the increasing love of Sri Swamiji towards Balappa other attendants became inflamed with jealousy. Sundarabai quarrelled with him and then showered a number of abuses. This annoyed Balappa to a great extent but Sri Swamiji made him understand. When other attendants started harassing him, Balappa got annoyed and decided to return home. **Sri Swamiji therefore ordered Balappa to continuously chant the 'Mahamool Mantra' in the temple of Lord Hanuman.** Later one day, an attendant complained to Sri Swamiji about Balappa and how he stayed away from him for chanting 'Japa'. **Sri Swamiji replied back smilingly, "Oh! My devotees maybe anywhere far away, but still they are nearby".**

Balappa was troubled even in the temple of Lord Hanuman and hence Sri Swamiji went there in person to calm the situation. When Sri Swamiji decided to undertake the great journey (Mahasamadhi), he called his favourite disciple Balappa and gave him his ring. He placed his bountiful hand on his forehead and blessed him. He then removed the *Rudraksha* from his own necklace and asked Balappa to wear it. He also gave him his clothes and his very own 'Paduka' with orders to build a temple.

Balappa established a big temple in Akkalkot and continued to worship Sri Swami Samarth. After the 'Mahasamadhi' of Sri Swamiji, Balappa carried on that tradition for about thirty-two years and hoisted Sri Swamiji's flag with full competence. **By discharging an arrow of Divine love, a Sadguru, diverts the attention of a disciple from worldly entanglements and encourages him towards spiritualism. He applies his entire spiritual strength and attempts to make the disciple perfect. Thus a Sadguru converts a disciple into a perfect Sadguru like himself. "A Sadguru converts a disciple like himself without any delay!"**

Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey Himself, was on earth in manifested and non-manifested forms for nearly 800 years. In the manifested

form, he remained at Akkalkot and showered his kind grace as and when he wanted. There is no count of the number of disciples he made, but some of the disciples of Sri Swami Samarth that reached the stage of Sadguru and spread the devotional lustre, are shown below-

1) Sri Krishna Saraswati alias Kumbhar Swami of Kolhapur
2) Balappa Maharaj of Akkalkot
3) Beedkar Maharaj of Pune
4) Swami Nrusimha Saraswati of Alandi
5) Vaman Bua Vamorikar or Badodekar
6) Thakurdas Bua of Mumbai
7) Haribhau or Swamisut of Mumbai
8) Gopalbua Kelkar or Preetinand Swamikumar of Chiplun
9) Taat Maharaj of Mumbai
10) Dev Mamledar of Nasik
11) Anandnath Maharaj of Vengurla
12) Anand Bharati or Laxman Koli of Thane, Mumbai
13) Rangoli Maharaj of Kolhapur
14) Jamadar of Maindargi
15) Seetaram Bua of Mangalvedha
16) Dadasaheb alias Sachhidanand Swamikumar of Mumbai
17) Baba Gholap of Nasik
18) Kal Bua of Pune
19) Mayuranand Saraswati of Sopara
20) Nana Rekhi of Ahmadnagar
21) Shankar Maharaj of Pune
22) Jangli Maharaj of Pune
23) Bavadekar Bua of Barshi
24) Sachhidanand Maharaj of Pandharpur
25) Sripati Baba Maharaj of Mahalunge
26) Gopalkrishna Swami of Hupari
27) Gajanan Maharaj of Shegaon
28) Saibaba of Shirdi

## Sri Swami Samarth And Royal Personalities

Most royal personalities are often very proud and addicted to pleasures. However, there are a few royal personalities with religious devoutness as well as righteousness. Sri Swamiji was a stark naked ascetic who treated a beggar and king equally. Even then, there were some royal personalities that established contact with Sri Swamiji.

### Maloji Raje

Raje saheb Maloji Raje, king of Akkalkot State, was a good and virtuous person promoting the growth of devoutness, honesty, fairness, and uprightness. It is only because of him that Sri Swamiji set up a temporary abode at Akkalkot. Maloji Raje always went for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji. He sometimes succeeded in convincing Sri Swamiji to come and stay with him at the palace. Rajesaheb made sure that all the comforts and amenities of the State were available for the service of Sri Swamiji.

With the kind blessings of Sri Swamiji, Rajasaheb had a son born in his family. The British Government at the time had dismissed the state Government of Akkalkot, but the same was restored with the kind mercy of Sri Swamiji. Thereafter, all members of the royal family of Rajasaheb became devotees of Sri Swamiji.

Nevertheless, Sri Swamiji also did not refrain from criticizing him for his demerits or drawbacks. Once when Rajasaheb came riding on an elephant to visit and seek the blessings, Sri Swamiji slapped Raje for such a status show and disrespect. Sri Swamiji had also shown his disappointment when Rajesaheb had given shelter to the atrocious and tyrannical Dajeeba Bhosle; Rajesaheb had to endure the fruits of such displeasure of Sri Swamiji. Nonetheless, Sri Swamiji still had a great liking for Maloji Raje. When Rajesaheb was lying in his deathbed, Sri Swamiji personally walked to the palace and gave him the last blessings.

### Jayajirao Shinde (Scindia)

Jayajirao Shinde, the Maharaja of Gwalior was a very virtuous, religious, and devoted person. He had no ego of his royal powers. He had great reverence for saints as well as large-hearted and generous people. He sang hymns in the praise of God getting himself deeply absorbed in devotion. When he went to Akkalkot for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swami Samarth, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey, Sri Swamiji was residing in the palace and nobody was allowed to visit. Maharaja Shinde became very distressed, but waited patiently for four days. Sensing his pure devotion, Sri Swamiji came out of the palace and sat under a *Vatavriksha*. When he got this news, the Maharaja kept aside his royal meal and ran bare footed. He made the offerings and then prostrated in front of Sri Swamiji.

Sri Swamiji resolved all his doubts relating to spiritual matters and divinity. Sri Swamiji gave him some divine experiences too. Maharaja Shinde then said, "I have met a number of saints and ascetics until date, but I did not see such lustre in any of them. I have not seen anyone who can speak such a language and yet give correct answers to the questions. There is no doubt that Sri Swamiji is an incarnation of God". Maharaja Shinde was fully satisfied when he returned to Gwalior with total devoutness.

## Tukojirao Holkar

Tukojirao Holkar of Indore had come for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji to Akkalkot. At that time, Sri Swamiji was resting under a *Vatvriksha* in the courtyard of the house of Anna Arnalkar. As soon as Tukojirao saw Sri Swamiji, he started talking and said, "Maharaj, once you had blessed me with your 'Darshan' on Abu Mountain. Now this is the second time you have blessed me." Tukojirao then realized that Sri Swamiji and Lord Dattatrey are one and the same. He rendered devotional service for four days and then returned to Indore.

## Malharrao Gaikwad

Maharaj Malharrao Gaikwad of Baroda greatly desired for Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj to come and stay in Baroda. He believed that even if Sri Swamiji visited Baroda once, Baroda would be blessed and become a holy place with the touch of his lotus feet in that land. Therefore, he made announcement in front of the full house at his royal court, "Whoever brings Sri Swamiji to Baroda, that person would be allotted a big *Jahagir* and all expenses incurred in bringing Sri Swamiji would be borne by the state". In his royal court there was one ambitious chieftain by the name of Tatyasaheb. He decided to accept the challenge. Maharaj Gaikwad became very happy and fulfilled all of Tatyasaheb's requirements including servants, attendants, and money before sending him to Akkalkot.

Once in Akkalkot, Tatyasaheb first took Sri Swamiji's attendants into his confidence by giving them gifts and then brought up his subject with Sri Swamiji tactfully through these attendants. Sri Swamiji asked Tatyasaheb to offer meals to the Brahmins, sometimes distribute riches or clothing in charity. Tatyasaheb obeyed Sri Swamiji and spend sufficient money. He continued offering meals to the Brahmins. However, Sri Swamiji was himself very quiet and therefore, there was no progress in the matter.

Tatyasaheb then decided to give it another chance. He found out that Sri Swamiji mostly listens to Cholappa. Therefore, he made an offer to Cholappa that if Cholappa were successful in making Sri Swamiji agree to come to Baroda, he would receive an award of a *Jahagir193* worth ten thousand rupees. This surely tempted Cholappa and he waited for the right moment before finally speaking with Sri Swamiji. He said to Sri Swamiji, "Maharaj, if you agree to go to Baroda, I will be awarded a *Jahagir*, worth rupees ten thousand". Sri Swamiji smiled and said, "I would have certainly gone to Baroda, but he does not have any devotional sentiments."

When Tatyasaheb learned about this, he started reading the *Guru-Charitra* thoroughly. When this did not give him much success, he plotted a plan with the help of attendants. He thought of a deceptive plan to take Sri Swamiji in a palanquin silently to Kadar station and then further take him in a train all of a sudden to Baroda. A special train was arranged for this journey of Sri Swamiji. Tatyasaheb was very happy for victory up to this point and he proceeded towards the station. With all the security arrangements, the palanquin reached the station. Tatyasaheb came forward to receive Sri Swamiji, but to his surprise the palanquin was empty and Sri Swamiji had disappeared. The entire plan had failed. Finally, Tatyasaheb realized that nobody could take advantage of Sri Swamiji using such petty tricks. He was totally disappointed and finally returned to Baroda.

Later, Maharaj delegated this task to another chieftain, Yashwantrao. When Yashwantrao came to Akkalkot, Sri Swamiji spoke with full enthusiasm, "What is this? Put shackles". Within two days, Yashwantrao received orders to return and a court case was started against him in Baroda. He was finally punished in a court case connected to feeding poison to someone. Sri Swamiji's words about putting shackles on Yashwantrao eventually turned out to be true.

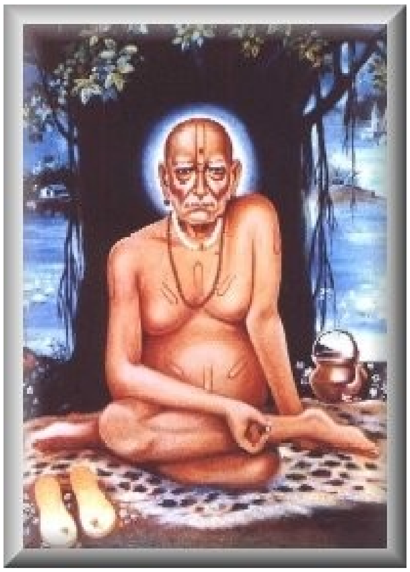
### Nabab Sir Salarjung

The well-known *Dewan*[287] Nabab Salarjung of Hyderabad State had great reverence towards Sri Swamiji. He had come to Naldurga, Osmanabad District in Maharashtra with great devotion for the 'Darshan' of Sri Swamiji.

A number of such royal personalities were attracted towards Sri Swami Samarth. Several *Sardars*[288] and *Jahagirdars* were his devotees. Sri Swamiji was an extraordinary Divine personality with number of undefined attributes. He was not at all concerned with the wealth or grandeur of these *Sardars* and *Jahagirdars* that visited him**. Sri Swamiji always had a soft heart for true devotion.** If Sri Swamiji had gone to Baroda, he would have surely received great honour and prestige. Maharaja Malharao Gaikwad would have laid down his entire regime for the welcome and service of Sri Swamiji, but there was no devotion. How can Sri Swamiji, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey go there?

[287] Dewan: Prime Minister
[288] Sardars: Chieftains. Generally considered very royal.

## Swaroop Sampradaya



**Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj** ordered his youngest and dearest disciple, Shree Ramanand Beedkar Maharaj of Pune, to propagate the Swaroop Sampradaya.

Swaroop Sampradaya is a religious sect wherein the aspirant concentrates on viewing the 'Atman', the soul. 'Swaroop' means knowledge of the 'Atman', the soul. A living being is normally entangled in worldly illusion. To liberate a living being from the entanglement of this worldly illusion and lead him towards the knowledge of 'Atman', the soul is itself known as the Swaroop Sampradaya of Sri Swami Samarth.

Swaroop Sampradaya is a very ancient tradition with Lord Shiva as the first Guru. Lord Shiva first initiated Goddess Parvati into Swaroop Sampradaya and later this tradition continued in history with the initiation of Lord Vishnu, Lord Brahma, Sages Vasishtha, Shukdeo and others. This tradition further continued with Guru's such as Sri Govindpad, Sri Jagadguru AdiShankaracharya, Sri Vidyaranyaswami, SriKrishnasaraswati and Srimat Nrusimha Saraswati up to Sri Swami Samarth, the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey.

'Swaroop Sampradaya' is based on 'Dnyan-yog', the acquisition of true knowledge that leads to the attainment of absorption into the universal spirit. It represents worship of attribute-less Supreme Spirit, but also accepts the worship of a deity with attributes. The human soul attains the Supreme Spirit through the worship of a deity with attributes. This philosophy is honoured as a doctrine for the identity of human soul and the divine essence.

With the kind blessings of Sri Swami Samarth, the tradition of this 'Swaroop Sampradaya' was passed on to Shree Ramanand Beedkar Maharaj who then blessed Shree Vasudevanant Sarswati (alias Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe) for further propagation of the 'Swaroop Sampradaya'. Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe in turn blessed Shree Sahajanand Saraswati (Shree Vitthalrao Joshi alias Shree Digambardas Maharaj) to continue further with the Swaroop Sampradaya.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj has versed -

"**Nrusimha Saraswati the incarnate of Lord Dattatrey (I)**
**An idol of purity and knowledge (II)**
**He himself manifested as Sri Swami Samarth (I)**
**In the city of Akkalkot (II)**

**Instantly propagated the Swaroop Sampradaya (I)**

**With the bestowal of true knowledge (II)**

**Initiated Ramanand as disciple (I)**

**A great disciple for regular disposition (II)**

**Ramanand initiated Vasudevanant Saraswati (I)**

**The incarnate of Sri Swami Samarth, for the welfare of mankind (II)**

**For the propagation of Swaroop Sampradaya (I)**

**Ramanand showered kind blessings on him (II)**

**In the family of Sahasrabuddhe, (I)**

**Ramachandra manifested in auspicious period (II)**

**He only is Vasudevanant Saraswati (I)**

**He himself is Lord Dattatrey, the God Almighty (II)**

**He initiated Vitthal (I)**

**And then showered his distinguishing form of splendour (II)**

**For the propagation of Swaroop Tradition** (**I**)

**He ordered Vitthal (II)**

**He named Vitthal as Sahajanand Saraswati (I)**

**Ordered him to propagate the tradition (II)**

**Of Swaroop Sampradaya with path to meditation (I)**

**For the branch of Saraswati Sect (II)**

**Know that ours is the sect of Lord Dattatrey (I)**

**Holding the authority of natural state of self without attributes (II**)".

Shree Digambardas Maharaj later passed on the responsibility of this tradition to Shree Ashok Joshi, alias Shree Kaka Maharaj.

The Swaroop Sampradaya follows the path of 'Rajyog', a simple and easy mode of abstract meditation and not that of 'Hath Yog' that is a mode of austere devotion. One can accomplish the 'RajYog' by living in this illusive world and conducting normal household duties. Even King Janaka[289] had attained 'Rajyog'. One can continue with the feelings of sacrifice internally, while maintaining worldly relationships with external society, but strictly without any attachments. To achieve such detachment is possible but not easy. Shree Digambardas Maharaj has versed –

**"Internally with feelings of Sacrifice and worldly relationship externally (I)**

**You can still maintain yourself without any attachments (II)".**

[289] King Janaka: King of Mithila, father of Goddess Sita, the devoted wife of Lord Rama

**'Rajyog' has five different modes –**

**"Pipeelika mode, Kapi mode, Meena mode, Shambhavi mode and Vihangam mode".**

Pipeelika (Ant) Mode, where the aspirant attains accomplishment starting from the very base organic circle, crosses each circle after than until he reaches the thousandth circle, just like an ant.

Kapi (Monkey) Mode is where the aspirant attains accomplishment jumping like a monkey from one organic circle to another, until he reaches the Thousandth circle.

Meena (Fish) Mode is where the person who attains accomplishment, sees an ocean filled with knowledge of self and that person filled with joy sinks into that sea of self-knowledge. In this condition, the living being absorbs into the essence of Supreme Spirit along with the knowledge of self.

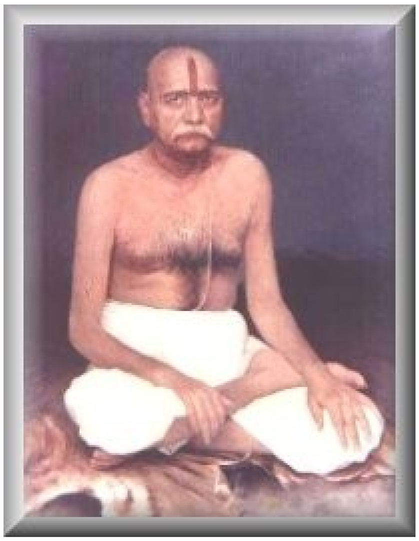
In Shambhavi (Hemp) Mode, accomplishment is easily performed based on the principle of 'Soham', a feeling that "I am that Supreme Spirit". The natural and continuous accomplishment of 'Soham' comes along with breathing techniques. This accomplishment is also called as 'Ajapajap'. With the kind mercy of a Sadguru, the person who repeats 'Soham Soham' accomplishes the liberation from personal existence and gets absorbed in divine substance, with the realisation that He is the Soul.

In the Vihangam Mode (Bird), the person who attains accomplishment flies like a bird and in a moment reaches the Supreme Soul. He gets absorbed in the essence of Supreme Spirit without any delay.

This path can be achieved only with the kind blessings of a Sadguru. If anyone tries to practice by reading books without the blessings of a Sadguru that person can loose their mental balance. One should not advise an immature person to these modes. If a person is immature because of the lack of accomplishment, prostration of strength takes place and that person becomes wicked. If the accomplishment takes place in a proper manner, the person who accomplishes attains the knowledge which itself is a clear proof of the success.

Basically, this path leads to the worship of the attribute-less, but to achieve success in that path one has to worship a deity having attributes and form. Only through this worship can one attain the attribute-less Supreme Soul. There is always oneness in the natural state of self as well as that of the Supreme Soul. The names may be different but the result is the same. The final accomplishment of an individual self is always to get absorbed into the universal self, the Supreme Soul. Only a great Sadguru can bless his disciple and take him beyond this worldly illusion by granting him the divine sight and accomplishment of the individual self, getting absorbed into the all pervaded universal self, the Supreme Soul.

## The Tradition Of Swaroop Sampradaya – Shree Beedkar Maharaj



Akkalkot Niwasi Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj had ordered his most able and enthusiastic disciple Shree Sadguru Beedkar Maharaj to propagate further the Swaroop Sampradaya, by staying in Pune, Maharashtra, Shree Beedkar Maharaj was the youngest disciple of Sri Swamiji by age, but senior-most in spiritual accomplishment. He was born on 22nd November 1839, in the family of a Rigvedi Brahmin. He was very intelligent, fair skinned with bright lustrous eyes, a charming slim body stature, and an impressive personality.

His father worked as one of the trusted employees of the wealthy peshwai of Pune. By misfortune, Ramanand lost his father at a tender age of seven. The British rulers at that time offered a pension of two hundred rupees to his mother Gangutai, but she declined to accept it on the grounds of self-respect and her resolve not to subsist on the help of foreigners.

From early childhood, Ramanand had a great attraction towards the worship of God. One particular year, he and his friends planned and started their journey towards Pandharpur. However, after walking for some distance his friends got tired and foreseeing the difficulties in their journey they returned, but Ramanand continued his journey alone on foot and finally reached Pandharpur.

In Pandharpur, there was a huge crowd of pilgrims everywhere around the temple. Overwhelmed with the huge crowd, Ramanand felt he would never be able to get the Divine sight of Lord Vithoba; he became totally helpless and started to cry. Miraculously, Lord Vithoba himself, disguised as a temple priest took hold of Ramanand's hand and walked him to the innermost part of the temple very near to the idol of Lord Vithoba. He arranged for his 'Darshan' of Lord Vithoba, grabbed one of the garlands from the idol of Lord Vithoba, and put it on Ramanand's neck. Afterwards, the priest took him out of the temple in open space, left him there, and then suddenly disappeared.

Once Ramanand had been to Saptashringee Hill near Nasik, Maharashtra, for having the 'Darshan' of Goddess Saptashringee. Then miracle took place. The *Veeda*, which was placed in the mouth of Goddess Saptashringee, fell down in the hands of Ramanand. It was a miracle, since this Veeda never had fallen down in the past. The devotees standing there clapped their hands for this miracle and had respected Ramanand saying, "You are a great devotee and the Goddess has blessed you".

After completing some school education, Ramanand started his own money-lending business. He also had a remarkable gift of examining precious stones. He later started a business for antiques. Once, he while he was cleaning some of the antiques he had bought in a good deal, he found a unique lamp stand. While cleaning this lamp stand, he found that it was made of gold and contained diamonds and rubies in the hollow portion of its base. Thus, he became a wealthy man overnight. He then started his own money lending business and people now started addressing him as Bhausaheb Shroff with due respect for his high status in the society.

Due to the sudden dawn of good fortune, he started living a life full of enjoyment and pleasures. He developed a passion for dance and music entertainment, as well as drinking wine. Gradually, the Divine grace of Goddess Laxmi started diminishing on him and he was mentally very unhappy. He sought after various saints, when one of them taught him the art of *alchemy*. Shree Beedkar Maharaj had enjoyed all pleasures of life to the utmost degree and had reached the top of worldly pleasures. When all paths to worldly pleasures came to a saturation point, he decided to put an end to his sensual pleasures and achieve life's highest truth, the Divine Truth.

He sought out and visited many ascetics as well as saints and often had long spiritual discussions with them. Observing his ways and style, one saint remarked sarcastically "You are enjoying all the pleasures of your life to the utmost degree. You are not fit for achieving life's highest truth, the Divine Truth. You have to accept ascetism otherwise, you cannot achieve anything". This sarcastic remark touched the heart of this strong minded as well as firmly resolved Ramanand Beedkar and vowed that he would put an end to his life of sensual pleasures and achieve life's highest truth, that is the Divine Truth. He did vow but became restless, as he was totally accustomed to the life of sensual pleasures.

However, once he took a forward step, it was his in-born quality never to retreat, so he started worshipping his family deity, Lord Hanuman. After few days of concentrated worship, pleased by his strong devotion Lord Hanuman blessed him with a vision in his dream and advised him to go to Akkalkot and get the blessings of Akkalkot Niwasi Sri Swami Samarth.

Ramanand went to Akkalkot. He was so determined that he vowed not to accept any food until he gets the blessings from Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami Samarth was staying at the palace of the ruler of Akkalkot during those few days and there was no possibility of him coming out of the palace, at least for the next fifteen days. Ramanand was determined not to break his vow. He fasted severely for two days. On the third day, Sri Swami Samarth started screaming at the palace incumbents, "You are imprisoning me? My devotees are facing difficulties since they are not getting my blessings". So with an uproar, Sri Swami Samarth jumped out from a wall of the palace possibly for the sake of his to-be favourite disciple, Ramanand Beedkar.

When Ramanand Beedkar came to know about Swami's whereabouts, he carried all the material and objects required to worship a deity and went to Sri Swami Samarth. He offered his worship and surrendered himself at the feet of Sri Swami Samarth. Sri

Swami Samarth asked him "Why are you prostrating at my feet? ". Ramanand replied, "I want a very firm foundation (I want your full blessings)". Sri Swamiji pointed his finger to a deerskin hanging on a wall peg and said, "Look there, Look there". Ramanand did not understand the purpose of showing deerskin and said, "I am ignorant". Upon hearing this, Sri Swamiji burst out with anger and started abusing Ramanand. Other devotees present there became very nervous and started pulling Ramanand away, but he stood there steady and patient without getting nervous with the abuses. Seeing his firmness, Sri Swamiji stopped his abuses and finally said, "You can now go from here - Your work is done (You are fully blessed)".

As per the orders of Sri Swami Samarth, Ramanand returned to Pune. His was totally transformed and he continuously started chanting the words *Sadgururaj Mauli*[290] and *Sadguru Atmaram*[291]. A year later, when Ramanand went to Akkalkot to get his blessings, Sri Swami Samarth said to him, "The seed you have sowed has grown into a mango tree. Mangoes are getting ripe. When the mangoes are fully ripe, your aim will be fulfilled". Another year later (third Year) Ramanand went back to Akkalkot with determination not to return without getting fully blessed with initiation from Sri Swami Samarth. So upon arriving at Akkalkot this year, he started rendering devotional service at the lotus feet of Sri Swami Samarth.

Ramanand continued his devotional service to Swamiji even at night and slowly massaged Sri Swamiji's legs. He massaged throughout the night, but Sri Swamiji did not ask him to stop even when it was dawn. Suddenly, a miracle took place and a dreadful cobra appeared from in between the knees of Sri Swami Samarth. It started hissing at Ramanand by raising its hood. This was a moment of test for his virtue and courage. So without caring about his life, he continued massaging the legs of Sri Swami Samarth. Sri Swami Samarth angrily got up and roared at Ramanand "You monstrous fellow, go away from here" and slapped Ramandand with force. With this strong slap, Ramanand lost his consciousness and instantly passed into Super conscious state.

He regained consciousness only on the next day and his delightfulness was inexpressible in words. Since that very moment, he experienced total detachment from the worldly matters. Ramanandji thus attained *Vairagya*[292]. Sri Swami Samarth ordered Ramanandji to give a ceremonious dinner to a thousand Brahmins. Ramanandji became very worried, since he had absolutely no money left to comply with the Guru's orders. The container of perfume bottles, which he had brought with him, had been destroyed in an accident. By collecting the remains of these perfumes from the broken bottles, Ramanandji prepared a special perfume 'Ashtagandha' (a mixture of a variety of perfumes, normally eight different kinds of perfumes). He offered this special perfume to the ruler of Akkalkot, who was very much impressed and paid a good price to Ramanandji. Ramanandji then arranged for the ceremonial dinner to thousand Brahmins with this money and thus he fulfilled the commands of his master, Sri Swami Samarth.

[290] Sadguru Mauli: The preceptor a mother - Ramanand with affection looked upon his preceptor Sri Swami Samarth, as his mother
[291] Sadguru Atmaram: The precepto, who has been distracted from sense objects and delighted in the contempletion of one's own soul
[292] Vairagya: Complete detachment from worldly pleasures. A very high state of realization.

After this, Sri Swami Samarth asked Ramanandji "What would you offer me as 'Gurudakshina'? ". Ramanandji said, "I shall obey your orders with great respect". Then Sri Swami Samarth said, "You must immediately stop your business of perfumes and converting base metal into gold using the medicinal herbs. This will be your *Gurudakshina*[293]". Ramanand agreed without hesitation.

After returning to Pune, Ramanandji totally detached himself from worldly attachments. People started saying that Ramanandji had gone lost his mental balance. He did not pay any attention to their remarks. Next year, when he went to Akkalkot, Sri Swami Samarth ordered him to undertake Narmada77, an arduous circular pilgrimage of the entire route of the river Narmada. He started the Parikrama bare feet from Omkar Mandhata. He had vowed to himself, that he would not request anybody for food unless someone offers by free will; if required, he will only drink water for survival. This pilgrimage was a real test of his devotion towards his Guru and for his patience. He had various adventurous and dangerous experiences during this pilgrimage, He was harassed by the Gosavis / ascetics; had to jump into a river inhabited by crocodiles. He had to walk bare feet and had to complete his pilgrimage in burning hot sun. Once Mother Narmada appeared in person and offered him a pot of milk to drink. One great ascetic fed him a root to repress hunger. One beautiful lady put his honour to test, but by the kind grace of Sri Swami Samarth he remained calm without distraction and successfully stood the test. By this time Sri Swami Samarth had taken Mahasamadhi.

Ramanandji returned to Pune after his Narmada parikrama. He had left everything at the will of God. To pay back his loans, he had to sell his house. His virtuous wife, Smt. Janakibai 'Aaisaheb' became restless on account of these circumstances, but Ramanandji remained indifferent. He set up a Temple-shrine at Pune and worked towards resolving the difficulties of the people. In addition, he also propagated spiritualism for the upliftment of his devotees to achieve life's highest objective, the Divine Truth. Every year, seven to eight festivals and other religious practices as per the family tradition were being celebrated with great pomp and show.

Shree Beedkar Maharaj was strongly rebuking his devotees for their mistakes. He said "You show carelessness in your worldly dealings. Hence you are not able to make any progress in spiritualism either. Because you are under my shelter, I am rebuking you. It is my earnest attempt that you become skilful in every matter and also sharpen your intelligence. Those who do not come under my shelter will not get a single word regarding them".

Shree Beedkar Maharaj had a mother's affection towards his devotees but was equally tough at the same time. Very often he said, "I tell you to go insane. But nobody is ready to become insane".

It was only Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe, who always acted as per the advice of Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Hence Shree Beedkar Maharaj exclusively blessed

[293] Gurudakshina: A gift to a Guru, the spiritual preceptor on the completion of a course of instruction

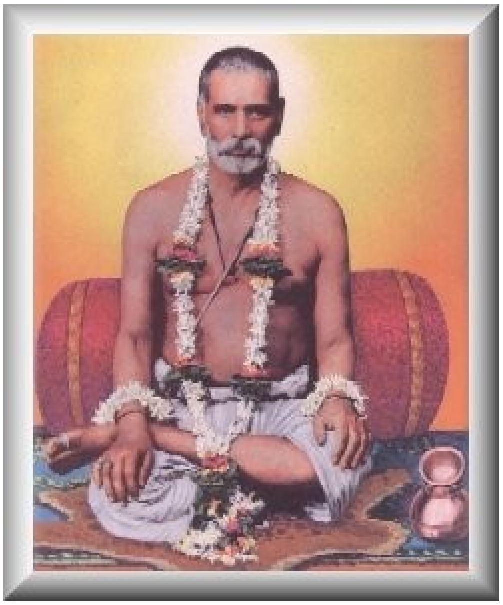
Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj alias Raosaheb Sahasrabuddhe by placing his hand on the latter's head and entrusted to him the task of continuing the tradition of Swaroop Sampradaya. Of the many other disciples of Shree Beedkar Maharaj, Anna Maharaj Bahutule took over the responsibility of Shree Beedkar Maharaj Muth.

As per Shree Beedkar Maharaj, once a person comes in contact of devotion, he cannot leave that impression of devotional rite. He used to say "Just like cowdung fallen on the ground is bound to lift some earth with it, a person who takes the refuge of a Guru, shall definitely achieve some spiritual development". Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj had once told him "Ramya, serving food to somebody unless he is hungry, will fail to serve any purpose. The food will be wasted". But Shree Beedkar Maharaj replied, "Anybody can feed the hungry. I shall feed a person who is satisfied to one's fullest capacity. I shall certainly impart spiritual advice to those who have the desire for knowledge; likewise for those, who have no desire for knowledge too. I shall also feed spiritual advices and lead them towards God".

Shree Beedkar Maharaj had enjoyed all the worldly pleasures of this life to the utmost degree. Likewise, he also achieved life's highest truth that is the Divine Truth. The case of Shree Beedkar Maharaj was a burning example of what a man can achieve with firm belief and devotion. He took *Mahasamadhi* on Tuesday, 1st April 1913.

**Shree Vasudevanant Saraswati Maharaj**

Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe alias Shree Raosaheb Sahasrabuddhe



The one who carried forward the tradition of Swaroop Sampradaya from Shree Beedkar Maharaj was Shree Vasudevanant Saraswati. He was also known as Shree Baba Maharaj alias Shree Raosaheb Sahasrabuddhe. He had gained a spiritual height that led Shree Beedkar Maharaj to say,

**"Raosaheb is my Gem".**

In the tradition of Swaroop Sampradaya he is acknowledged as the incarnation of Sri Swami Samarth. He was born on the noon of 14th November 1883 as per English Calendar and Kartik-Poornima-Shake 1805 as per Hindu Calendar in Hubli, Karnatak State. He was named as 'Ramachandra'. His family name was 'Sahasrabuddhe'.

When Shree Baba Maharaj went to Pune to pursue his studies in Engineering, he came under the kind blessings of Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Since then his life was entirely transformed. From then onwards, he remained absorbed in meditation. During his final examination for L. C. E. (Engg), he did not distance with his practice of meditation. His mother, Smt. Laxmibai Sahasrabuddhe worried about his future and prayed to Shree Beedkar Maharaj. Shree Beedkar Maharaj consoled her and said, "He is completely under my care and attention". Accordingly, Shree Baba Maharaj passed his Engineering Examination with good marks due to the blessings of Shree Beedkar Maharaj and eventually, he took employment in the Public Works Department (P.W.D).

In the year 1906, Shree Beedkar Maharaj was greatly pleased to bless Shree Baba Maharaj; he blessed him by placing his hand on the forehead of Shree Baba Maharaj and said "Raosaheb, I have now made you permanent". With these words, Shree Beedkar Maharaj bestowed upon him the ultimate self-realization with the help of *Shaktipath*[294]. Since then, Shree Baba Maharaj always remained in 'Videhi state' (Disembodied state). Later in the year 1910, Shree Baba Maharaj got married according to the wishes of his Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj.

He worked in the Public Works Department (Govt. of India) as Assistant Engineer and was posted to different places like Ratnagiri, Pen, Mahad, Panvel and Nagothane, all in Maharashtra State. Because of strong devotion towards his Guru (Preceptor), Shree Baba Maharaj visited Pune every Saturday however far his employment may be just to seek the blessings from Shree Beedkar Maharaj. When he

[294] Shaktipat: The ancient method of awakening and activating the Kundalini energy in the shortest possible time. Kundalini energy is the energy dormant at the base of the spine of every human being

was at Pen, he would travel to the nearest Palasdari station 36 miles away by riding a bicycle and then catch a train to go to Pune station. After some days he was posted as P. A. in the office of Assistant Architect, Mumbai. Since he always remained absorbed in transcendence, his subordinate staff thought that he is not working; so they made a complaint to their officer. The Supervisor then came for investigation based on this complaint. He asked for the measurements of the buildings in construction as part of inspection. Without seeing the records, Shree Baba Maharaj wrote all the measurements of the building just from his memory on a piece of paper and gave it to the Supervisor. When the supervisor inspected that building and took all the detailed measurements, he was simply astonished to find these actual measurements matching precisely with the measurements written on the paper, by Shree Baba Maharaj. The Supervisor was just marvelled at this incredible memory power and the mysterious working system of Shree Baba Maharaj.

Shree Baba Maharaj had sentiments of oneness. He had a tendency of seeing God in every living being. Hence he would bow his head and salute the peons to everybody else in his office. Since he was always absorbed in meditation, some people considered him crazy. Once when he was taking a stroll he went up to the church at Bandra, Mumbai. He sat down near the church and lighted the *chiroot*[295]. After taking the first puff he got himself absorbed into such a state of meditation that he regained consciousness only when the cheroot was completely burnt along with his fingers holding it.

Once on his payday, he saw a beggar standing in front of him. Being so absorbed in meditation, he put his hands in his pocket and gave away the entire pay to that beggar. Since Shree Baba Maharaj was always absorbed in state of Divine contemplation, people thought he had lost his mental balance. His relatives admitted him in a Mental Hospital at Yerawada, Pune. The doctors in the hospital thoroughly examined him and concluded that he had no psychological issues and instead they thought he had extraordinary wisdom. Hence the doctors arranged for a separate bed away from all other mental patients and provided all good facilities to him. He remained there for about one year.

At last when Dr. Nirokhekar, another disciple of Shree Beedkar Maharaj came to know about Shree Baba Maharaj being admitted to a Mental Hospital, he took help of some close associates and fellow students to get Shree Baba Maharaj discharged from the Hospital. After this, Shree Baba Maharaj presented himself in the office and got reinstated. But because of his condition of being absorbed in the state of Divine contemplation, he regularly missed office. Therefore, ultimately he opted for Voluntary retirement and got it sanctioned. After retirement he started staying in Dhumal Building, Narayan Peth, Pune, for the rest of his life.

The temple-shrine of Sadguru Shree Beedkar Maharaj was very near to this place. Shree Baba Maharaj visited the temple three times in a day, sang devotional songs with *Ektari, a single string* musical instrument, and simultaneously got himself absorbed in Divine contemplation. Even if he were sick with temperature up to 105 degrees, he would stay absorbed in the Divine contemplation. Once vowed and stared at the sun from sunrise to sunset with naked eyes continuously for 21 days.

[295] Chiroot: A kind of cigar

His wife Smt. Durgatai Maa saheb took good care of him as long as she lived. But after her death in 1945, there was nobody to look after him. His devotees brought him food and he would keep a little from it for himself before distributing the rest to his devotees. Very often, Shree Baba Maharaj would distribute stale food that was sometimes even four days old, like tea and *khichdi* [296]to his devotees. It was a common experience that the stale food he gave always tasted like fresh food. Shree Baba Maharaj cured a number of sick people, saved them from the jaws of death, and took them beyond their calamities. He directed many people desirous of knowledge towards the spiritual path.

Shree Baba Maharaj accompanied some of his devotees & travelled to various holy places such as Rameshwer in Tamilnadu, Jagannathpuri in Orissa, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, Ayodhya in Uttar Pradesh. Once he visited the holy place of Tryambakeshwar in Maharashtra State, Western India. The devotees that accompanied him learned about a great saint residing on a nearby mountain. When the devotees went to take the blessings of that saint, the saint proclaimed, "When a great saint is already with you, why are you searching for him somewhere else?". Shree Keshavdutt Maharaj of Sonageer would come every year to worship Shree Baba Maharaj in a 'Shodshopchar way'. He always said, "If you want to see a fully accomplished Divine saint, you have go to Shree Baba Maharaj". Shree Lele Maharaj, the Guru of Yogi Aurobindo said, "Shree Baba Maharaj has attained the stage of Ultimate self-realization. It is impossible for a worldly person to perceive that stage of Shree Baba Maharaj". The great Parsi saint MeherBaba had come to pay homage to Shree Baba Maharaj. Anandmai Maa and Shree Shankar Maharaj also maintained great respect and love towards Shree Baba Maharaj. **Shree Baba Maharaj preached his devotees and disciples "Meditate for half an hour before having your meals".**

In the year 1953, Shree Baba Maharaj blessed and initiated Shree Vitthalrao Joshi (Shree Digambardas Maharaj) and passed on the responsibility of propagating the Swaroop Sampradaya. Shree Baba Maharaj had mentally decided of departing from this world, so he decided to free himself from this mundane existence by taking 'jalsamadhi' (ending bodily existence by drowning in water) in the Sharayu River, at the holy place Ayodhya in U. P. State, North India. So he took the permission to depart from all and went on pilgrimage to Ayodhya along with some devotees. At Ayodhya he got down in the Sharayu River for the abandonment of his body, but it so happened that he could not find any place in the Sharayu River with water level above the anklebone. Then Shree Baba Maharaj remarked, "This shows that the Sharayu River refuses to give me any place for taking Jalsamadhi. This may be the wish of God Almighty". So he returned to Pune.

After returning from Ayodhya, his health was fast deteriorating. He had continuous temperature as well as the trouble with piles. Over time, he reduced the intake of food. He wanted to stay near Shree Digambardas Maharaj, but he had ordered Shree Digambardas Maharaj to stay in Ratnagiri. His health started deteriorating further. He had such a burning sensation in his body that even by placing ice cubes nearby or by dressing him with wet coat the burning sensation would not calm down.

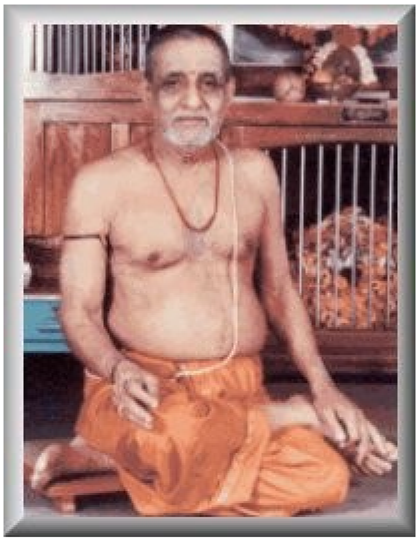
[296] Khichdi: A mixed preparation of rice and pulse

**Ultimately on Tuesday, 18th August 1954(Shravan Vadya Chaturthi 1876, Manmath Samvatsar Mangalwar Angarki Chaturthi as per Hindu Calendar, Shree Baba Maharaj left his mortal body and merged with, the Nirguna Parabrahma, the infinite formless Supreme Lord. His last rite was performed on the plot owned by him at Chatushringi road in Pune.**

**Shree Baba Maharaj had promised his devotees and disciples "I would stay here for 1000 years for the well being of my devotees and disciples". After some days, his disciple and apostle of Swaroop Sampradaya, Shree Digambardas Maharaj built the "Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe *Samadhi Mandir*[297]" on that plot.** In that Samadhi Mandir, Shree Digambardas Maharaj started rendering service to Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj by celebrating many festivals. As per his Sadguru's wishes, Shree Digambardas Maharaj took responsibility of the social service offered by Shree Sant Seetarambua Walavalkar, at Dervan and simultaneously also handled the Samadhi Mandir work of his Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj at Pune. The devotional awareness has risen to its topmost level and taken practical form due to the wisdom, hard work, and resourcefulness of Shree Digambardas Maharaj in both places, Dervan and Pune.

[297] Samadhi Mandir: A Temple Shrine dedicated to a Saint after he leaves his body

## Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj



Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj worked extremely hard for the upliftment of the masses, which earned him a distinguished place in the family of modern-age saints of Maharashtra. His was deeply inspired by Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj for his ambitions on the awakening of this country and by Shree Samarth Ramdas Swami for his strong beliefs in the Hindu religion.

On October 17, 1912 (Ashwin Shukla Ashtami Shake 1834 as per Hindu calendar), in a small village called Pomendi (Budruk) in the coastal province of Konkan (12 Kms from Ratnagiri), a son was born to the devout and deeply religious couple, Shri Ganesh Vishnu Joshi and Smt. Janakibai. The parents named the child as 'Vitthal' with great love. His father was a landlord and ran a business of renting farms. He was born in a flourishing home.

Since early childhood, Vitthal Ganesh Joshi was a devotee of God and completely detached from worldly matters. At a tender age of 12, he lost his mother and at the age of 18, he lost his father. He then developed a strong desire to seek a Sadguru. So he left home and went in search of a Sadguru. Coincidently, he went to the Muth of Shree Beedkar Maharaj at Pune, where by his great fortune he got the blessings of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe alias Shree Vasudevanant Saraswati. It's almost as if the Guru and his disciple were mutually awaiting each other. Shree Baba Maharaj manifested himself in the form of Akkalkotnivasi Sri Swami Samarth - the incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. He blessed and initiated young Vitthal (later known as Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj or Shree Maharaj) with graciousness in the Swaroop Sampradaya and made him the apostle of this sect. With this blessing from his Sadguru, Shree Digambardas Maharaj got a protector for life.

Later Shree Digambardas Maharaj worked as medical representative in Dr. Bose's laboratory for a short while. He faired extremely well at work, but the ardent desire for the divine knowledge did not let him focus on his career. Hence in 1946, he finally quit the job & returned to Ratnagiri to perform rigorous 'tapasya' (penance).

On July 24, 1953, Shree Baba Maharaj took his gold ring with serpent-headed pattern along with another silver ring and placed them on the right index finger of Shree Maharaj. Graciously blessing him with all favours, Shree Baba Maharaj said, "The ring from the preceptor's finger is finally back with the preceptor. Vithoba, from this very moment, I have taken your entire ego. Henceforth, you will not do anything of your own will; rather I will perform my role on your behalf".

**In 1953, Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj decided to give up this mundane existence. Shree Maharaj was very distressed with this decision of his Guru, so he earnestly prayed and persisted in getting an assurance from his Sadguru to stay on for one more year. Finally on August 18, 1954, Shree Baba Maharaj took Mahasamadhi (the last conscious communion with God). The last rites of Shree Baba Maharaj were performed on the plot No. 937-D, Chatushrungi Road, Shivaji Nagar(Pune, Maharashtra).**

**After the Mahasamadhi of Shree Baba Maharaj, Shree Maharaj resolved firmly to dedicate his life in the service of his Sadguru. Shree Baba Maharaj owned the plot where his last rites were performed. Shree Maharaj leased that plot No. 937-D from Smt. Nirmalatai Neelkanth Khare, the heir and only daughter of Shree Baba Maharaj. He dedicated himself to enhance the glory of his Sadguru and carry out all the public welfare works of Shree Baba Maharaj. Shree Maharaj said, "On July 24, 1953, my existence as Vitthal Ganesh Joshi came to an end. Now Shree Baba Maharaj performs his role through me. My condition is like "When I existed, my Guru did not! Now my Guru is here and my ego completely gone!"**

Initially, the Samadhi place was a wasteland filled with bushes. Shree Maharaj had the land levelled after cleaning the bushes and then constructed a temporary shed. All four sides of the land were enclosed with walls. A dwelling place and a water tank were constructed for the devotees. A flower garden was cultivated to provide fresh flowers for the daily worship. All surrounding land in the vicinity of this Samadhi place was purchased and the border was expanded.

There is always a wicked eye on every good deed in this world. Similarly, there were people who brought obstruction in the execution of this good deed and tried to take the land in their control by claiming it as public land. The case was taken to court. But Shree Maharaj did not lose his courage. The court finally gave a judgement in the favour of Shree Maharaj and declared that the temple is a private property and Shree Maharaj is a legal leaseholder of that property.

Even when going through all this harassment, Shree Maharaj very well organized and decorated the Samadhi place of Shree Baba Maharaj. He initiated spiritual programmes such as daily worship, meditation, and devotional prayers at the samadhi place. The performances of religious ceremonies as prescribed by the sacred books and scriptures were also started. A number of anniversary celebrations such as the anniversary of Shree Baba Maharaj, Sri Datta Jayanti (the birth day of Lord Dattatrey), Sri Swami Samarth Jayanti (the birth day of Sri Swami Samarth), Sri Rama Navami (Birthday of Lord Rama), Sri Ganesh Chaturthi and Sri Krishna Janmashtami (the birthday of Lord Krishna) were organized with great devotion. Innumerable devotees started to visit for these various festivals and also to get blessings.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj had a personality endowed with several remarkable qualities. He had a strong memory and would always remember the name, originating village, family occupation etc. of anyone he ever met, even if it was after a number of

years. Nobody could ever equal Shree Maharaj in qualities like simplicity, discipline, punctuality, generosity and tender-heartedness. He maintained intimate and affectionate relations with everyone, young or old. If anyone faced difficulties, Shree Maharaj was always eager to support and help them through their difficulties. But, if necessary he would not cease from rebuking someone with harsh words for their mistakes. Although, after such incidents he would talk to the person normally with good feelings as if nothing had happened.

If Shree Maharaj were ever pleased with any good qualities of his devotees, he would praise and then encourage those devotees to take meals with him. He would try to eradicate the difficulties of his attendants. He paid special attention and made sure the pets, such as parrots and dogs that lived at the Samadhi place were fed properly and on time. He was a true saint.

Shree Maharaj at times had such good legal advice for people visiting the samadhi mandir that even the prominent of lawyers would be surprised. He had an extra-ordinary wisdom. He always provided perfect guidance with regards to medical treatment or professional difficulties. During the construction of the samadhi mandir, he even explained the right from wrong on construction topics to the engineers at the site.

When the palanquins were taken in procession around the temple during the festive ceremonies at the samadhi mandir, Shree Maharaj would compose devotional songs and narrate them in an inspiring way. He was a very speedy composer of devotional poems. Even at the time of Kirtans (devotional singing), such devotional songs would trickle out spontaneously from his lips. He composed thousands of such devotional songs and sang them too. Unfortunately and by our misfortune very few of these compositions are available in writing. He was also an expert 'tabla' (Musical instruments) and drum player. He acted in dramas and was an artist too. In Pomendi (Ratnagiri) he created idols of Lord Ganesh, which portrayed his talent in art and painting. He also gave the right advice to artists as well as artisans.

Shree Maharaj was very well conversant with agriculture and farming. He had himself ploughed and cultivated the land. His knowledge regarding new and old systems of cultivating land, fertility of soil, fertilizers, seeds etc. was far superior to any experienced farmer. He directed the building of a good cattle shed and personally ensured that the shed was always neat, clean and the cattle were healthy and strong. He never liked the idea of selling old cattle to the butcher. He considered it as an ungrateful act on part of humanity to sell old cattle to a butcher after utilizing their services all through their life.

He had infinite faith towards Brahmins who were well versed in and followed the path of Vedas (Holiest Hindu Scriptures). He always said, "I treat Brahmins as my God" and believed with due reverence that "As Brahmins have protected the Vedas for thousands of years by undergoing great difficulties, we have to be highly grateful towards them". Hence to render due honour to the Brahmins, Shree Maharaj arranged a number of religious ceremonies and invited learned Brahmins from distant places. He

expressed gratefulness for the knowledge and skill of those Brahmins and honoured them generously.

**Along with his fiery religious devotion, Shree Maharaj also had a burning loyalty towards his country. A glimpse of patriotism was prominent in his expressions, words and conduct. He initiated a custom of celebrating the nations Independence Day as well as the Republic Day in the samadhi mandir by hoisting the National Flag. He was also involved in the '1942 freedom movement'. He went from village to village awakening nationalism amongst people and carry out agitation in a secret way. When 'SwaatantryaVeer'' (freedom fighter) Sawarkar visited Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, Shree Maharaj went to meet and discuss with him. This very national inspiration in him manifested the creation of the 'Shiv-Samarth Gad' (Fort) at Dervan, Chiplun Taluka (Subdivision) of Ratnagiri District, Maharashtra State in future.**

In parallel to the work at the samadhi mandir of Sadguru Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe in Pune, Shree Maharaj also managed the workload at Dervan as his field of work.

A great saint Shree Sant Digambarbaba Wahalkar resided in a neighbouring village in Chiplun, Ratnagiri District. Shree Maharaj had an old acquaintance with this saint who belonged to the tradition of Akkalkotnivasi Sri Swami Samarth Maharaj. Shree Maharaj also had great love towards Shree Sant Seetarambua Walavalkar, a disciple of Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar. Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj had entrusted upon him the responsibility of looking after Shree Sitarambua. Hence he often visited Sawarde village and rendered service to Shree Seetarambua. On observing that Shree Seetarambua faced a lot of difficulties in Sawarde he purchased some land for him in Dervan, built a house and also made arrangements for agriculture.

**Shree Maharaj formed the "Shreesant Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust" and determinedly carried out large and important social activities through this trust**. He purchased lot of land in the vicinity. The rich moneylenders, Muslims and political leaders, were harassing the poor people in the area. The trust provided the poor people with free food, clothing and blankets through this Trust. The poor people were also provided employment and free of charge Medical facility. They were taught new methods of cultivating lands and Shree Maharaj tried his best to get rid of their bad habits. He also encouraged their children in the field of education. He provided them notebooks and other school necessities, free of charge. Since their houses thatched by straw, leaked during monsoon, Shree Maharaj arranged for roofing thousands of such houses with Mangalore tiles, all free of charge. There was a shortage of water in the nearby villages therefore, the Trust organized tankers from Chiplun, 20 Kms away and supplied water to the villagers.

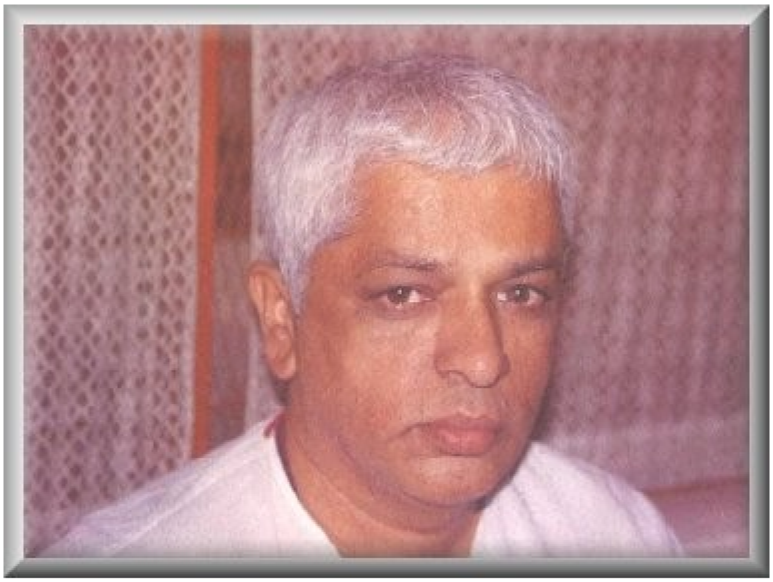
**By satisfying these daily necessities of the poor, Shree Maharaj desired to create consciousness in them for the love and devotion towards their religion and nation**. This sent a shocking wave of disapproval amongst the selfish people in the region, when their methods of exploiting the poor started to fail. They utilized various means of harassing the trust and Shree Maharaj by creating mischief

and negative publicity. But Shree Maharaj stood firm, faced all these difficulties courageously and continued his public welfare service.

**Shree Maharaj raised unparalleled memorials of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shree Samarth Ramdas in the form of Shree Shiv-Samarth Gad at Dervan. He did this for inspiring the local people on the ideals of loyalty to one's Nation as well as Religion. The birth anniversary of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is celebrated every year with great pomp. Thousands of people who adore Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj along with the Varkari (pilgrims) participate in a grand procession and fill up the air with love for their Nation and Religion.**

**Remaining averse from publicity, Shree Maharaj worked tireless for public welfare and for achieving life's highest objective i.e. the Divine Truth and thus always kept the flag of Eternal Vedic Religion of the Aryans hoisted. He continued these social welfare activities until his last breath. He took Mahasamadhi (the last conscious communion with God) on Vaishakh Krishna Pratipada, Shake 1911 i.e. on 21st May 1989.**

**Expansion Of The Sampradaya**



Before his Mahasamadhi, Shree Maharaj had consoled his disciples and devotees by saying, *"Even after departing from this world I will be around and act via Ashok (Shree Ashok Joshi-KakaMaharaj)"*.

He had also clearly said, "Ashok is my son. Ashok will continue the propagation of Swaroop Sampradaya and the public welfare activities further. Infact, I will myself perform all the activities through Ashok".

Thus, the responsibility of the preceptor to continue the tradition of a Sadguru has come upon the shoulders of Shree Ashok Joshi alias Kaka Maharaj and he is accomplishing the same skilfully.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj constructed the Shree Shiv-Samarth Gad (fortress) and the temple-shrine of Shree Seetarambua at Dervan. Now Shree Ashok Kaka Maharaj has been able to bring into reality the resolves of Shree Digambardas Maharaj for Divine service, National service and public service. He has been successful in these ventures with untiring efforts & hard labour along with the cooperation of disciples and devotees like the late Shree Kamalakarpant. L Walawalkar Saheb, Shree Vikas K.Walawalkar Saheb, Shree Prasad Tendulkar, Shree Balasaheb Kajarekar, Shree Madhavrao Mule and the rest. The various activities have continued up to date and the various resolves of Sadguru Shree Digambardas Maharaj that were already completed or in progress have been well taken care of under the active guidance of Shree Ashok Kaka Maharaj. Some of these resolves are as follows:

<u>Mumbai</u>

1) Shree Swami-Samarth Mandir- Andheri West

<u>Pune</u>

1) Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe Samadhi Mandir (Temple Shrine)
2) Shree Digambardas Maharaj Samadhi Mandir (Temple Shrine)
3) Dispensary

4) Ved-Pathshala (Vedic School)

Dervan

1) Shree Shiv-Samarth Gad

(Fortress, A place for Historic as well as Cultural inspiration)

2) Shree Datta-Mandir (Temple of Lord Dattatreya)

3) Shree Swami Samarth- Shree Ram Mandir (Temple)

4) Shree Sant Seetharambua Walawalkar Samadhi-Mandir (Temple-Shrine)

5) Shree Sant Digambarbaba Vahalkar Samadhi-Mandir (Temple-Shrine)

6) Shree Hanuman Mandir (Temple)-Sawarde

7) Shree Jnyananath Mandir (Temple)

8) Go-Shala (cowpen)

9) Shri Swami Samarth Udyan (Garden)

10) Bhaktashreshtha Kamalakarpant Walawalkar Hospital.

(The only Hospital in Konkan, Maharashtra, equipped with C. T. scan, Dialysis, Operation-Theatre, Laboratory and all medical facilities. Here the reputed doctors of Mumbai-Pune visit this Hospital on regular basis and give cooperation)

11) Relief Centre for Village Farmers

(Providing assistance as well as guidance regarding money, corn, cloth, seeds and manure for the fields etc. )

12) Relief Centre for the Students

(Providing free books, Notebooks, Uniforms, Scholarships, assistance regarding construction of new School-buildings as well as repairing of existing School buildings)

13) English Medium School

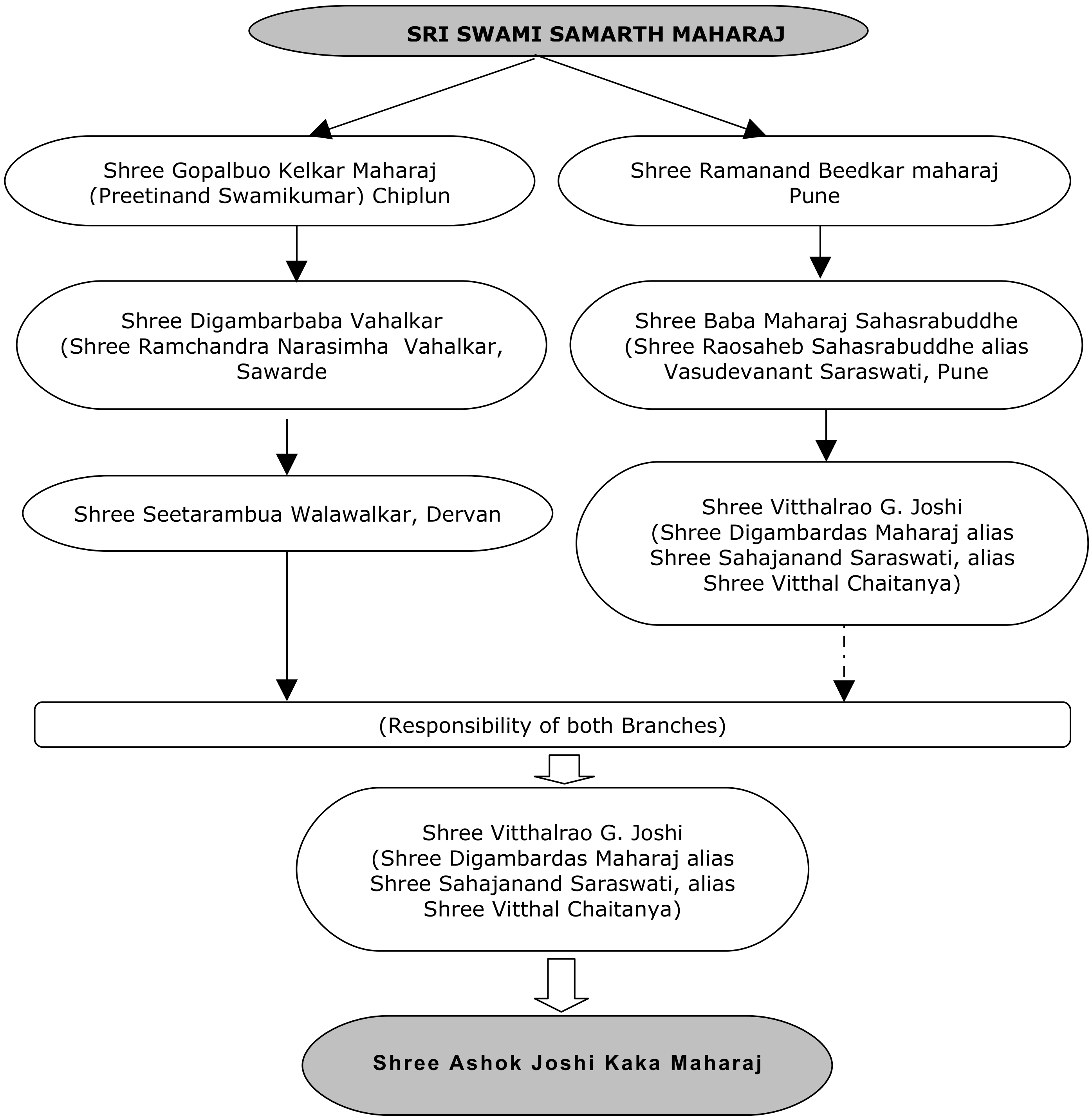
14) Nursing School

15) Nursing Collage

16) Publication of ethically sound books.

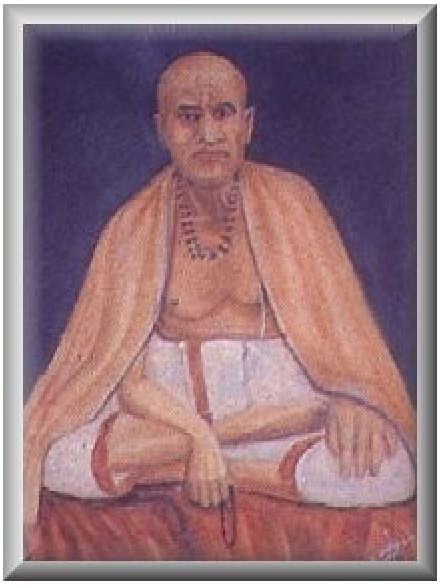
The daily worship, annual festivals, religious ceremonies, sacrifices and also the birth anniversary festival of Shree Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj are being performed with great enthusiasm in Mumbai, Pune and Dervan. Thus, the tradition of the Swaroop Sampradaya of Lord Dattatrey is on the rise under the able guidance of Shree Ashok Kaka Maharaj.

## TRADITION OF PUNE-DERVAN



## The Tradition Of Sawarde- Dervan

### Gopalbua Kelkar Alias Preetinand Swamikumar



Sri Swamiji had ordered his virtuous disciple 'Haribhau alias Swamisut' to hoist the devotional flag of Sri Swami Samarth along a seacoast. Following his orders, Swamisut erected a temple of Sri Swami Samarth at Kandewadi, Mumbai (Seaside near Girgaon, Mumbai) and spread the spiritual teachings of Sri Swami Samarth. Eventually, he selected a second seaside place at Chiplun, Ratnagiri District in Maharashtra. He had sent Sri Swamiji's 'Padukas' (Foot prints) to Chiplun in the year 1873 through Brahmachari Buwa. Bua then handed over these 'Padukas' to a teacher and mentioned, "Our man will come and look after these later. Until then you worship these 'Padukas' of Sri Swamiji".

According to the predetermined arrangements, Gopalbua Kelkar erected a temple on the banks of Markandi River in Chiplun to hoist the devotional flag of Sri Swami Samarth.

Gopalbua, Gopal Ramchandra Kelkar, was born in the year 1847 AD at Korle village near Rajapur Taluka, Ratnagiri District in Maharashtra. His poor living conditions only helped him study up to English third standard and therefore, he later joined the Railway Department. Due to his hard work and expertise, he soon became the Station Master and was transferred to Nagpur. There he suffered from dropsy, a stomach disorder. He had severe stomachaches and no remedy could give him any relief. The doctor advised him to go for a climate change and hence he resigned from his service and returned home. He was so frustrated with the severe stomach pain that he finally gave up and called upon God for help, "Whoever is the God of this world, if I am cured of this severe stomach pain then except for God, I shall not render service to anybody else throughout my life". It was a great wonder that within eight days of this keen prayer, he started getting relief from the severe pain.

He then decided to go to Akkalkot and get the blessings of Sri Swami Samarth, but he had no money. By lying to his family members, he somehow managed to reach Akkalkot. He only had five paise with him at that time. With that money, he purchased two dried dates and visited the shelter of Sri Swamiji. As soon as he was graced with the blessings of Sri Swamiji, he lost his consciousness. He stayed in Akkalkot living on food provided by people and continued rendering service to Sri Swami Samarth. Once Sri Swamiji appeared in his dream, touched his stomach with his hands and said, "I shall cure your illness". Gopalbua suddenly woke up from his dream. He then passed

plenty of urine and was cured of his severe illness forever. Gopalbua had the habit of smoking tobacco. One day he woke up early dawn and got a strong urge to smoke tobacco. But he could not find it anywhere. He saw a lamp lit near the place where Sri Swamiji was sleeping. He went there and started burning a thin rope. Sri Swamiji suddenly woke up and Gopalbua started trembling. He prostrated at the feet of Sri Swamiji and prayed "Kindly shower your mercy on this humble servant". Sri Swamiji happily initiated Gopalbua. Gopalbua became fully gratified. .

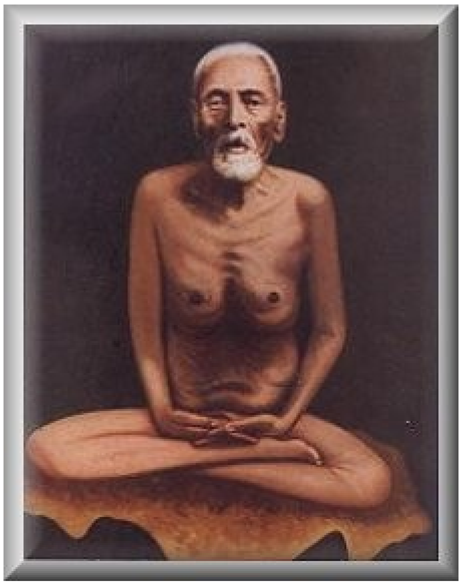
Gopalbua had left his house to go to Akkalkot without informing his family and therefore, they had become very anxious. When his wife came to know that he is in Akkalkot, she immediately travelled to Akkalkot in search of her husband. Sri Swamiji brought her and Bua together and then ordered Bua "There is a place called Markandi near Chiplun, Maharashtra. A Brahmacharibua has installed my *Padukas*. You must stay there and worship those 'Padukas'. Take your wife along with you and set up a family". Sri Swamiji blessed them and gave two coconuts and one dried date as *Prasad*. After these orders from Sri Swamiji, Gopalbua left Akkalkot, stayed with Swamisut in Mumbai for a few days and then went to Chiplun along with his wife.

During those days, Markandi was place surrounded with thick forests. Gopalbua settled in such a place along with his wife. Every Thursday, he would collect alms in the form of rice, rice-gruel and prepare their food. He would then get himself fully engrossed in the devotion of Sri Swamiji. Over time, people learnt about this place and started visiting. A number of people had their difficulties resolved with the grace of Sri Swamiji. A temple was then built with the cooperation of these people.

With the kind grace of Sri Swamiji, Gopalbua soon became a father to two sons and one daughter. Sri Swamiji had named Bua as Preetinand Swamikumar. Following his name, Preetinand was totally absorbed in the happiness that flowed from his affection towards Sri Swamiji and rendered service with single-minded devotion. He took *samadhi* in the year 1929. His Samadhi-tomb was constructed in the temple itself.

**Gopalbua composed two devotional scripts- 'Karuna Stotra' and 'Sadhana Vivek Saramrit' in poetic form using the name of Preetinand Swami Kumar. He also compiled all the known miracles of Sri Swamiji in his book "Bakhar (historical annals) of Shree Swami Samarth"**.

### Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar Maharaj



Shree Ramchandra Narasimha Katdare Maharaj was a resident of Vahal village located near Chiplun, Ratnagiri District in Maharashtra. He was born in the year 1872. After studying to some extent, he started working with Nanal, a lawyer from Ratnagiri who owned large agricultural farms at Sawarde-Dervan. Ramchandra Narasimha Katdare-Vahalkar looked after these farms. He regularly visited the Datta Mandir of Sawarde to get blessings.

Once Vahalkarji had some conflicts with the lawyer, so he quit the job and went to Sawarde. He sat under a banyan tree opposite to the Datta Mandir in a naked condition without any food or water for one whole week chanting the name of God. Finally, the people of Sawarde persuaded him to accept some food willingly. He was absorbed in Divine contemplation and behaved as though he was possessed by a demon.

In this condition, Akkalkot Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj, graced him by making an appearance in from of him. His mental condition became self-meditative with the blessings of Sri Swamiji. He lost his consciousness and started wandering continuously chanting the name of God. Therefore, people started calling him as 'Digambarbaba' (naked Baba). His wife and family members tried their best to divert his attention towards worldly life but he was fully absorbed in attaining life's highest objective, the Divine truth.

Digambarbaba left Sawarde and came to Gopalbua Kelkar Maharaj at Chiplun. He took the initiation from Kelkar Maharaj as his Guru and performed rigorous penance. He was fully absorbed in chanting the sacred Gayatri mantra for nearly 13-14 years. Gayatri Mantra is a sacred verse from the Vedas. He chanted this mantra ten million times along with contemplation, meditation as well as the practice of yoga or Spiritual devotion. In the afternoons, he would stare intently at the Sun with fixed eyes; he also sprinkled holy water continuously on a '*Shaligram'*. He would dive in water thousand to twelve hundred times in any season. He would perform devotional worship in a lonely place. Digambarbaba had already destroyed his fondness and attachment towards his physical body. He was blessed with the company of many great saints like Brahmachaitanya Gondavalekar Maharaj, Vasudevanand Saraswati (the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey alias Tembeswami), Chounde Maharaj, Narayan Maharaj Kedgaonkar, Sai baba Mahara, Gadge Maharaj and Kaka Puranik Maharaj.

He was able to attain such perfection in *Yoga-Vidya*[298] that he could dive & sit under water in a state of trance, absorbed in devout meditation for hours. Once when was visiting Gondavale in Satara District, Maharashtra, he dived into a well and he did not come out of the water for quite some time. People tried to pull him out, but Gondvalekar Maharaj told them "Digambarbaba is practising penance under water. So, please do not trouble him. He is a great saint". Digambarbaba came out of water after a few hours. He practised similar penance in Ratnagiri where Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj would take him in a boat in the mornings to a far away spot in the sea. Digambarbaba would dive into the sea and practice penance for hours. In the evening Shree Digambardas Maharaj would go to the same spot and call him. Upon hearing the call, Digambarbaba would come out of the sea and then come back to seashore with Shree Digambardas Maharaj. Digambarbaba practiced such penance for a number of days.

Once when he was travelling to Sawarde from Mumbai in a ship, he could not buy the ticket since he had no money. The ticket checker made fun of him and jokingly said, "If you do not have a ticket, then jump into the sea". Digambarbaba immediately jumped into the sea. They stopped the ship and started searching for him. After about an hour, they saw Digambarbaba swimming in the sea at a far away distance. The fishermen pulled him in their boat and later he was seen on the dock at Jaigad port.

Digambababa Vahalkar Maharaj travelled to all the holy places of India. He mostly visited places where Shree Swami Samarth had performed his miracles. He desired to build a temple of Shree Swami Samarth near Vai in Satara District, Maharashtra, and was busy making arrangements for the same. But Lord Dattatrey appeared in person in his dream along with Shree Swami Samarth and ordered him to renovate the Datta Mandir (Temple of Lord Dattatrey) at Sawarde, Ratnagiri District.

With cooperation from several devotees, the renovation of the Datta Mandir at Sawarde was completed in the year 1915. The festive inauguration went on for one full month. During that period, Digambarbaba directed a number of religious ceremonies like Rigveda Samhita Swahakar, Ganapathi Atharvasheersha Sahasravartan, Shatachandi Havan, Srimadbhagwat saptah and so on. There was *Mahaprasad* daily and thousands of devotees attended the celebrations. In the meanwhile, all members of the Vahalkar family fell sick with dysentery. Digambarbaba went into deep meditation and realized that when installing the new 'Padukas' during renovation, they had forgotten about the *Padukas* of Shree Swami Samarth he had brought from Shree Swamisut and installed in the Datta Mandir before renovations. These 'Padukas' were now lying outside the temple in the open, near the holy basil plant. He immediately picked up the 'Padukas' from that open place and placed them in the same old place where they were previously installed. After this incident, the sickness of all his family members suddenly disappeared.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj first met with Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar Maharaj in the year 1942. From then onwards, Shree Digambardas Maharaj was linked

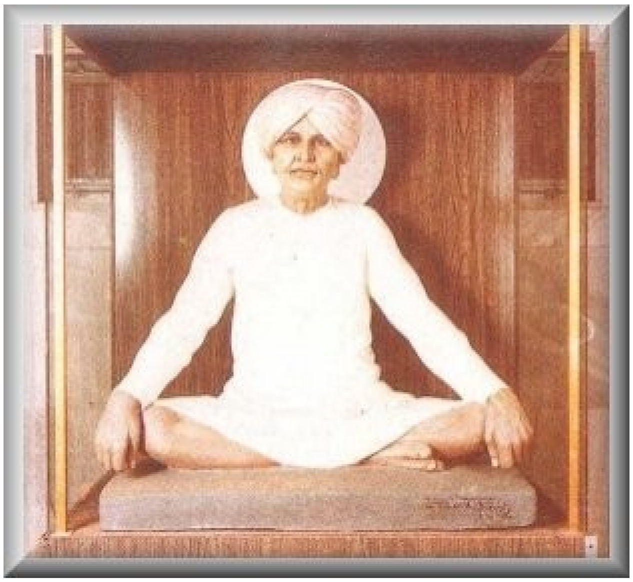
[298] Yog-Vidya: Science of spiritual discipline

to Sawarde. Shree Vahalkar Maharaj had visited Shree Digambardas Maharaj's house in Ratnagiri as well as in Pomendi.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj offered good service to Shree Digambarbaba. Whenever Shree Digambardas Maharaj visited Sawarde he would stay in Datta Mandir along with Shree Digambarbaba. One night when Shree Digambardas Maharaj was sleeping in this Datta Mandir, Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj personally woke him up and gave him a round marble with his own hands.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj had great respect for Shree Digambarbaba Maharaj and always offered him the best of service. Shree Digambarbaba, with severe penance as well as untiring devotional service hoisted the flag of Shree Swami Samarth in Sawarde. In the year 1951, Shree Digambarbaba took Samadhi. His disciple, Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar built his 'Samadhi' near the Datta Mandir.

**Shree Seetarambua Walawalkar Maharaj**



Shree Seetarambua Walawalkar was a dedicated disciple of Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar. He belonged to the Terase Bambarde village, Sawantwadi Taluka, Sindhudurg District in Maharashtra. After studying for a few years he went to Mumbai in search of employment. He worked for 8 to 10 years in a cotton mill, a cloth store and for some time with the Police Department. From early childhood he had strong attachment and devotion towards God. One day suddenly he distributed his entire salary amongst beggars, quit his job, and wore a loincloth and a long robe to become a *fakir*. He continuously started to chant the name of Lord Shiva and smeared his entire body with ashes. Wandering about in this condition he reached the Maruti-Mandir at Kondamala village near Chiplun District.

Observing his inclination towards asceticism the people of Kondamala took him to Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar at Sawarde. Shree Digambarbaba stayed with his fellow-disciple Shree Shembekarbua at Sawarde in Datta-Mandir (the temple of Lord Dattatrey). Shree Digambarbaba accepted Shree Seetarambua as a disciple and allowed him to stay at the temple. Since then, Seetarambua humbly offered his entire life in the service of his Guru.

He fully absorbed himself in ploughing the fields belonging to Datta-Mandir, building embankments in the farms to prevent flooding, begging and collecting alms for managing the temple works, celebrating the festivals and rendering service to the Guru etc. He single-handedly broke a sheet of rock near the temple and built a well. He used water from this well and built a garden for the temple. Early every morning he collected the holy basil for his worship and then worked in the farms.

At noon, after taking bath he performed all the religious rituals and then went to collect alms. He would then cook his food with the alms collected and offer the same as 'Naivedya' to Lord Dattatrey before serving himself. From noon until night, he would work in the field and then render service at the feet of his Guru, Shree Digambarbaba. Shree Seetarambua rendered such undivided devotional service to his Guru Shree Digambarbaba for nearly forty years. He was the ideal of devotion to a Guru.

Shree Digambarbaba Vahalkar Maharaj of Sarwarde belonged to a particular tradition of Shree Swami Samarth, which also belonged to Shree Baba Maharaj

Sahasrabuddhe alias Shree Vasudevanant Saraswati, Pune (disciple of Shree Ramachandra Beedkar Maharaj). There was a tie of affection between these two sects. Shree Digambardas Maharaj, disciple of Shree Sahasrabuddhe Maharaj always met Shree Vahalkar Maharaj since 1942. After Shree Vahalkar Maharaj took Samadhi, Shree Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe had ordered Shree Digambardas Maharaj to take care of Seetarambua in all ways. As per his wishes, Shree Digambardas Maharaj provided all types of support to Seetarambua. Shree Digambardas Maharaj coordinated with both these branches of Shree Swami Samarth tradition and handled exceptional social welfare works.

Every year, Shree Digambardas Maharaj went to Sawarde three to four times and celebrated the religious festivals at Sawarde with great pomp. He provided petromaxes, carpets, pots and vessels, pairs of cymbol and tabors, wealth and food grains etc for these festivals. He helped Seetarambua in all manners with pleasure as per the wishes of his Sadguru.

Seetarambua survived by collecting cooked food for alms. To reduce his hardships, Shree Vahalkarbua had given him the one and a half acre land belonging to the 'Datta-Mandir'. Shree Vahalkarbua had entrusted the temple 'Datta-Mandir' to his son-in- law Raghunath Shembeka who seized the land given to Seetarambua and took it in his possession. Shree Seetarambua had to once again start collecting cooked food in alms. He somehow managed the festivals of Datta-Jayanti (The festival held in the month of Margashirsh, December in the honour of Lord Dattatrey) as well as the 'punyatithi' (the death anniversary day) of saint Sadguru Vahalkarbua by collecting alms.

Shree Digambardas Maharaj purchased some nearby land and a bullock cart for Seetarambua. Raghunath Shembekar was furious with this act and started disregarding Seetarambua. Shree Seetarambua had built a small Lord Hanuman temple at the funeral site of his Guru, Sadguru Vahalkarbua. A thatched roof covered the top of this small temple. Out of anger, Shembekar pulled down that temple. Shree Digambardas Maharaj purchased land in the nearby Dervan Village and built another 'Hanuman Mandir' (Temple of Lord Hanuman). He also started building a house for Shree Seetarambua but in the meantime, Seetarambua ended his mundane life in 1969 and departed from this world. Thereafter, Shree Digambardas Maharaj had to take all the responsibilities of that temple.

**In the memory of Shree Seetarambua, a dedicated devotee of Shree Swami Samarth tradition, Shree Digambardas Maharaj established the 'Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar Charitable Trust' through which he started many resolves for the awakening and welfare of the people. First of all he built a Temple-shrine of Shree Seetarambua and then onwards started many programmes of rendering devotional service to God, nation as well as rendering welfare service to the people in Dervan. This place now represents an everlasting and permanent memory of Shree Seetarambua Walawalkar**.

## Temple Information

**Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj Sahasrabuddhe Samadhi Mandir**
**&**
**Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj Samadhi Mandir**

937/ D, Chatushrungi Road,
Near Dnyaneshwar Paduka Chowk,
Shivajinagar,
PUNE
Pin Code : 411 016.
Maharashtra State
INDIA
Phone : 020-5655021
Timings : 06.30 A.M. to 11.00 A.M. and 03.30 P.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST)
*Temple - Shrine of Shree Sadguru Baba Maharaj*

**Akkalkot-Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth Mandir**

Shree Swami Samarth Nagar,
Off Four Bunglows,
Andheri (West),
MUMBAI
Pin Code : 400 053
Maharashtra State
INDIA
Phone : 022 - 2 633 30 30
Timings : 06.00 A.M. to 11.00 A.M. and 04.00 P.M. to 09.00 P.M. (IST).
*Temple of Akkalkot Niwasi Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj*

**Shree Shiv-Samarth Gad and Temple Campus**

Shree Kshetra Dervan,
Tal. Chiplun,
Dist. RATNAGIRI
Pin Code : 415 606
Maharashtra State
INDIA
Phone : 02355-34049
Timings : Gad - 08.00 A.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST)
Temples - 08.00 A.M. to 12.00 Noon and 02.00 P.M. to 06.00 P.M. (IST)
Shree Kshetra Dervan - located on Durgawadi road, 3 kms. from Savarde. Savarde - a village on Mumbai - Goa highway, 16 Kms. from Chiplun

*Temple - Shrine of Shree Sant Seetarambua Walawalkar, Shree Kshetra Dervan*

# Glossary

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| Aarti | A very important part of worship in which the devotee waves a lamp around the Sadguru or Deity and simultaneously sings devotional hyms. |
| Abhanga | Singing of religious hymns in praise of God or Sadguru |
| Adimata | Goddess Parvati. Divine consort of Lord shiva |
| Adnya Chakra | The kundalini energy center at the center of forehead between the eyebrows. A chakra is a nexus of metaphysical and/or biophysical energy residing in the human body along the spinal cord. There are seven charkas/centers and each has its own properties. They are (from bottom of the spine and up): Muladhara or The base or root chakra, Swadhisthana or The sacral chakra, Manipura or The solar plexus chakra, Anahata or The heart/emotions chakra, Vishuddha or The throat chakra, Ajna or The Third eye, and Sahasrara or The crown charka. The chakras are described as being aligned in an ascending column from the base of the spine to the top of the head. Each chakra is associated with a certain color, multiple physiological functions, an aspect of consciousness, a classical element, and other distinguishing characteristics.They are visualised as lotuses with a different number of petals in every chakra. The chakras are thought to vitalise the physical body and to be associated with interactions of a physical, emotional and mental nature. They are considered loci of life energy, or prana, (also called shakti), which is thought to flow among them along pathways called nadis. The function of the chakras is to spin and draw in this Universal Life Force Energy to keep the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical health of the body in balance. |
| Ajanubahu | One whose arms are long enough to reach the knees |
| Ajanubahu | One with long arms that reach upto the knees |
| Akshata | Consecreted rice. Akshata: (Sanskrit) "Unbroken." Unmilled, uncooked rice, often mixed with turmeric, offered as a sacred substance during puja, or in blessings for ceremonies. This, the very best food, is the finest offering a devotee can give to God. |
| Alakh | Name of Brahma, the creator of universe. |
| Alchemy | The art of transforming base metal into Gold |
| Amavasya day | New moon day |
| Anant Vrat | Infinite Religious Observance |
| Anchal | The border of her saree. Generally Women extend the border of their saree to accept blessings from a Sadguru or Deity. The blessings can be in various forms: coconut, cloth, rice etc depending on the Sadguru's wish at the time. |
| Annas | One Indian rupee equals sixteen annas. |
| Ashad | The fourth month of the Hindu year and the month June\July, as per English Calendar |
| Ashram | Hermitage. An Ashram (Pronounced 'aashram') in ancient India was a Hindu hermitage where sages lived in peace and tranquility amidst nature. Spiritual and physical exercises, such as the various forms of Yoga, were regularly performed by the hermitage residents. Other sacrifices and penances, such as Yajnas were also performed. |
| Ashwin Krishna Dwadashi | The twelfth day of second fortnight of the seventh 'Ashwin' month as per Hindu Calendar and October or November month as per English calendar |
| Atmalinga | Symbol of Self. An embodiment of a supreme entity's divine presence. |
| Atmanand | Soul-Joy resulting from Divine contemplation |
| Atri Rishi | Atri maharishi is one of the ten sons of Creator Brahma, created by just the will of the Almighty and therefore designated as a Maanasa-putras (mentally generated issues). There were ten of these. Atri's wife is Anasuyaa, a daughter of Kardama |

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| | Prajapati. They had three sons: Datta, Durvasa and Soma. Rama, the son of Dasaratha, visited Atri Maharishi's Ashram during his fourteen years of stay in the forest. It was Atri who showed the way to Dandakaranya forest to Rama, after showering his hospitality on him. Atri Maharishi is considered to be one of the great discoverers of sacred Mantras of Hinduism. In his family line there were a few other seers of mantras namely: Shaavaashva, Avishtir, and Purvaatithi. There were also other great Rishis in that line: Mudgala, Uddaalaki, Shaakalaayani, Chaandogya, etc. Atri-samhita and Atri-smriti are two works attributed to Atri. |
| Audumbar | Glomerous Fig tree. Always associated with Lord Dattatreya. Also known as Udumbar Tree. |
| Avadhoot | An avadhoot (also spelled Avadhut) is a mystic who has risen above body-consciousness, duality, and worldly concerns. The term is described in one text as one who is free from the consciousness of the ego, roaming free like a child over the face of the earth. An avadhut does not identify with the body, mind or emotions. Such a person is said to be pure consciousness in human form. The nature of the avadhut is the subject of the Avadhut Gita, the authorship of which is traditionally ascribed to Dattatreya. |
| Avadhoot Geeta | A sacred poem on the Incarnation of Lord Dattatrey |
| Avatar | An avatar most commonly refers to the incarnation (bodily manifestation) of a higher being (deva), or the Supreme Being (God) onto planet Earth. It usually implies a deliberate descent into lower realms of existence for special purposes. |
| Awalia | An accomplished muslim saint |
| Badrikavan | Badrika Forest |
| Badshah | Emperor or King |
| Bailiff | A Class III employee of the court |
| Balayogi | Child ascetic |
| Baroda | Now known as Vadodara, Gujarath State |
| Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi | Month of August-September as per English calendar |
| Bhagirathi | River Ganges |
| Bhagwat | A Purana depicting the glory of Lord Vishnu |
| Bhagwat Dharma | A system of divine faith and worship |
| Bhajan | Singing hymns in the praise of God or Sadguru. |
| Bharat | India |
| Bhasma | Sacred ash |
| Bhavani Mata | Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort. |
| Brahmachari | A celibate. |
| Brahmacharya-ashram | The first of the four Ashrams or stages of life, through which the Brahmin passes-that from the investiture with the sacrificial thread until marriage |
| Brahmani | Wife of a Brahmin |
| Brahmanistha | The one who is constantly absorbed in the cotemplation of Brahma |
| Brahma-rakshas | A haughty, disdainful spirit of a Brahmin. |
| Brahmarshi | Brahmarshi (from the Sanskrit words Brahma and Rishi) is the highest of the Rishis, the Hindu sages - one who has understood the meaning of Brahman. The title of Brahmarshi was a status defined and recognized in the sacred Vedas of Vedic religion. A Brahmarshi is the ultimate expert of religion and spiritual knowledge. Below him are the Maharshis (Great Rishis). The Saptarshis created out of Brahma's thoughts are perfect brahmarshis. They are greater than the Devas in power and piety. Vishwamitra was the only brahmarshi who rose to the position out of pure tapasya, a journey lasting tens of thousands of years as explained within Hindu mythology. Originally belonging to the kshatriya caste of kings and warriors, |

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| | he rose by pure merit to a Brahmarshi. Bhrigu, Angira, Atri, Vishwamitra, Kashyapa, Vasishta, and Agastya are the seven brahmarshis. |
| Brahmatadakarata | Get absorption into the Supreme Being |
| Brahma-tatva | The true knowledge of Supreme Spirit |
| Brahmin | The traditional higher caste wherein the person is an expert in the knowledge of Vedas and other Vedic texts in the Hindu sacred Scriptures |
| Brahmin Bhojan | Sumptuous food served to all Brahmins as a part of service to Deity or Sadguru. |
| Burfi | Indian Sweetmeat. Generally prepared for festivities and special occasions. |
| Chandra Swar | Breathing air out of left nostril. |
| Charanodaka | The holy water which washed the lotus feet of Sri Swamiji |
| Charan-Teerth | Holy water obtained from washing the lotus feet. Considered to have divine energy of a Sadguru or deity. |
| Chaturdashguni tambul | A roll of betal leaf with fourteen ingredients like lime, betalnut etc |
| Chaturmas | Period of four months covered between Ashadha Shuddha Ekadashi to Kartik Shuddha Ekadashi as per Hindu calendar and July to November as per English calendar |
| Chillim | A small smoking pipe |
| Chiroot | A kind of cigar |
| Chowrie | A fly whisk made of feathers. |
| Circumambulating | Walking around the temple from left to right. |
| Damaru | A damaru is a small two-headed drum used by Lord Shiva |
| Dargah | A Muslim place of worship |
| Darshan | Darshan is a Sanskrit term meaning sight (in the sense of an instance of seeing something or somebody), vision, apparition, or a glimpse. It is most commonly used for visions of the divine; that is, of a god or a very holy person or artifact. We could have a "darshan" of the deity in the temple (at the gross level) or have a "darshan" in that inward eye of a light or awareness (at a subtle plane). Sudarshan means a glimpse of the "self". In India people travel hundreds of kilometres for the darshan, the look, of a holy man or woman because this look is believed to confer blessings. Conversely, looks of anger or envy are widely feared. "Darshan" means Seeing, derived from the root drsh= "to see" To see with reverence and devotion. The term is used specifically for beholding highly revered people with the intention of inwardly contacting and receiving their grace and blessings. "By doing darshan properly a devotee develops affection for God, and God develops affection for that devotee." In Indian culture, the touching of the feet (pranam or charanasparsh) is a show of respect and it is often an integral part of darshan. Children do touch the feet of their family elders while people of all ages will bend to touch the feet of a great guru or a form of God (such as Ram or Krishna). |
| Dashapindi | The oblations collectively to the manes of a deceased ancestor which are offered daily from the first day of his decease until the tenth or which are offered together on the tenth |
| Dashmi | A flat bread prepared in milk |
| Datta-Sampradaya | The tradition of Lord Dattatrey and his lineage |
| Devghar | A sacred place where deities or idols are established and worshipped. |
| Dewan | Prime Minister |
| Dharmaglani | Decline in religious practice |
| Dharmashala | A charitable institution meant for the accommodation of travellers (pilgrims). |
| Dhotees | A garment of males worn around waist passing under and tucked behind |
| Digambar | A naked ascetic |

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| Digambar Bua | Naked Man |
| Diwali | Diwali festival - the festival of nocturnal illuminations held during the last two days of Ashwin and first two days of Kartik, as per Hindu calendar and the month of November as per English calendar. The festival marks the victory of good over evil. The Sanskrit word Deepavali means array of lights that stands for victory of brightness over darkness. |
| Dwarka | A holy place of Lord Krishna in Gujarath. It is located in the Jamnagar District of Gujarat. It is on the mouth of the Gomti River into Gulf of Kutch. The city lies in the westernmost part of India. .Dwarka is rated as one of the seven most ancient cities in the country. The legendary city of Dvaraka in Hindu mythology was the dwelling place of Krishna. It is believed that, due to damage and destruction by the sea, Dvaraka has submerged six times and modern Dwarka is the 7th city to be built in the area. Dvaraka is mentioned in the the Mahabharata, the Harivansha, the Bhagavata Purana, the Skanda Purana, and the Vishnu Purana. The legend says that Krishna renounced war in Mathura for the greater good (and hence the name Ranchodrai) and founded (and settled in) Dvaraka. Sri Krishna killed Kamsa (his maternal uncle) and made Ugrasen (his maternal grandfather) the king of Mathura. Enraged, the father-in-law of Kamsa, Jarasandha (king of Magadha) with his friend Kalayavan attacked Mathura 17 times. For the safety of the people, Krishna and Yadavas decided to move the capital from Mathura to Dvaraka. Land was reclaimed from the sea near the western shores of Saurashtra. A city was planned and built here. Dvaraka was a planned city, on the banks of Gomati River. This city was also known as Dvaramati, Dvaravati and Kushsthali. It had well organized six sectors, residential and commercial zones, wide roads, plazas, palaces and many public utilities. A hall called "Sudharma Sabha" was built to hold public meetings. The city also boasted a good harbour. After Krishna left for the heavenly abode, and the major Yadava heads were killed in disputes among themselves; Arjuna went to Dvaraka to bring Krishna's grandsons and the Yadava wives to Hastinapur. After Arjuna left Dvaraka, it was submerged in the sea. Following is the account given by Arjuna, in Mahabharata: "The sea, which had been beating against the shores, suddenly broke the boundary that was imposed on it by nature. The sea rushed into the city. It coursed through the streets of the beautiful city. The sea covered up everything in the city. I saw the beautiful buildings becoming submerged one by one. In a matter of a few moments it was all over. The sea had now become as placid as a lake. There was no trace of the city. Dwaraka was just a name; just a memory." The Vishnu Purana states that "On the same day that Krishna departed from the earth the powerful dark-bodied Kali Age descended. The oceans rose and submerged the whole of Dvaraka." |
| Ekadashi | The eleventh day of a fortnight. Hindus treat Ekadashi as a very holy day and fast on that day. Considered very auspicious. |
| Fakir | Muslim mendicant |
| Ganagapur | In Gulbarga, Karnatak State. |
| Ganesh Utsav | Festival held in the month of Bhadrapad as per Hindu calendar, month of August /September as per English calendar, in the honour of the deity, Lord Ganesh, the son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati |
| Ganga Mata | River Ganges. Generally referred to as Mother Ganga. |
| Gayatri Mantra | The Gayatri Mantra is the most revered mantra in Hinduism (second only to the mantra Om). It consists of the prefix %om bhur bhuva svaha , a formula taken from the Yajurveda, and the verse 3.62.10 of the Rigveda (which is an example of the Gayatri meter). Since all the other three Vedas contain much material rearranged from the Rig Veda, the Gayatri mantra is found in all the four Vedas. The deva invoked in this mantra is Savitar, and hence the mantra is also called Savitri. The Gayatri is seen as a Divine awakening of the mind and soul, and within it a way to reach the most Supreme form of existence, and the way to Union with Brahman. Understanding, and purely loving the essence of the Gayatri Mantra is seen by many, to be one, if not the most powerful ways to attain God. Originally the personification of the mantra, the goddess Gayatri is considered the veda mata, the mother of all Vedas and the consort of the God Brahma and also the personification of the all-pervading Parabrahman, the ultimate unchanging reality |

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| | that lies behind all phenomena. Gayatri Veda Mata is seen by many Hindus to be not just a Goddess, but a portrayal of Brahman himself, in the feminine form. Essentially, the Goddess is seen to combine all the phenomenal attributes of Brahman, including Past, Present and Future [Bhuh BHuvah Swah] as well as the 3 realms of existence. Goddess Gayatri is also worshipped as the Hindu Trimurti combined as one [Vishnu, Brahma and Shiva], and the image of her portrays her carrying all the 'objects' in the hands of each God of the Trimurti, symbolising the Divine creation, preservation and destruction as one omnipotent force |
| Girded up his loins | i.e. Vowed. |
| Girnar Mountain | A Mountain in Gujarath. |
| Goddess Chandala Parmeshwari | Temple of Goddess near Gulbarga in Karnatak State |
| Goddess Jagadamba | Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's divine consort. |
| Goddess Laxmi | Goddess of Wealth |
| Godess Bhavani | Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort. |
| Gokarn Mahabaleshwer | A holy place in Karnatak State |
| Gotra | Lineage. 'Gotra' may be defined as a concept of patrilineal classification and identification of various families of a caste. |
| Granth | A Sacred book |
| Guru | Preceptor. The importance of finding a guru who can impart transcendental knowledge (vidya) is one of the tenets of Hinduism. One of the main Hindu texts, the Bhagavad Gita, is a dialogue between God in the form of Krishna and Arjuna a nobleman. Not only does their dialogue outlines many of the ideals of Hinduism, but the discussion and relationship between the two considered to be an expression of the ideal Guru/disciple relationship. In the Gita itself, Krishna speaks of the importance of finding a guru to Arjuna: Acquire the transcendental knowledge from a Self-realized master by humble reverence, by sincere inquiry, and by service. The wise ones who have realized the Truth will impart the Knowledge to you. (Bhagavad Gita, c4 s34) In the sense mentioned above, guru is used more or less interchangeably with "satguru" (literally: true teacher) and satpurusha. The disciple of a guru is called a sishya or chela. Often, a guru lives in an ashram or in a gurukula (the guru's household) together with his disciples. The lineage of a guru, spread by worthy disciples who carry on that guru's particular message, is known as the guru parampara or disciplic succession. The guru is the one who guides his or her disciple to become jivanmukta, the liberated soul able to achieve salvation in his or her lifetime through God-realization. |
| Guru Charitra | The biography of the spiritual preceptor |
| Guru Pooja | Worship of spiritual Instructor as an embodiment of God |
| GuruCharitra | In this context it is the Biography of Lord Dattatreya |
| Gurudakshina | A gift to a Guru, the spiritual preceptor on the completion of a course of instruction |
| Gurupratipada | Worship of preceptor on the first day of lunar fortnight |
| Gururaj | An ascetic of the highest order |
| Hakim | Arabic physician |
| Haladi-Kumkum | Turmeric powder and red powder. Considered auspicious and are used in sacred and religious ceremonies. |
| Haldi | Turmeric |
| Hans | One of the fourteen kinds of ascetics of high order. |
| Hanuman | Monkey God as per Hindu religion and symbolizes extreme and pure devotion to Lord Rama |
| Hathayogi | A person practising Hatha Yoga |

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| Hukka | A smoking pipe. Generally bigger than Chillim. See Footnote for Chillim. |
| Hurda | Parched corn of tender pods |
| In this context | A coper coin in circulation during those time equal to the sixty -fourth part of a rupee. |
| Jagadguru | The preceptor of the world. |
| Jagrut Daivat | The most awakened Deity. The one who fulfils the requests of his devotees. |
| Jahagirdar | One who holds the land gifted by the governmentnormally referred to as Jahagir. Generally considered to be very rich as a result of the land ownership. |
| Jalasamadhi | Self-immolation by drowning oneself in the water |
| Jamadar | Chief Police constable. |
| Jangam | One who is moving. |
| Japa | Chanting. Naamsmaran. |
| JattaA | Long Matted Hair |
| Jyotirlinga | Jyotirlinga is one of twelve famous Lingas of the Hindu God Shiva; Lingam is the emblamatic representation of Lord Shiva. The Lingam (also, Linga; Sanskrit meaning "mark" or "sign") is used as a symbol for the worship of god Shiva. The use of this symbol as an object of worship is a timeless tradition in India. Lingam is usually found with Yoni, the pedestal. As such, Lingam represented the male entity of the universe, while Yoni represented the female; it was natural togetherness of the male (Shiva) and female (Shakti) (Lingam and Yoni) as the point of energy, point of creation, and point of enlightenment. |
| Kadalivan | Kardali forest. Banana Grove [Van- Forest] |
| Kafani | A long robe worn by mendicants |
| Kali Mata | Goddess Parvati. Lord Shiva's consort. |
| Kali Yug | Kali Yuga** (lit. Age of Kali, also known as Iron Age), is one of the four stages of development that the world goes through as part of the cycle of Yugas, as described in Hindu scriptures. The other Yugas are Dwapara Yuga, Treta Yuga, and Satya Yuga. In the Vishnu Purana, for example, the Kali yuga is described thus- "In the Kali Yuga, there will be numerous rulers vying with each other. They will have no character. Violence, falsehood, and wickedness will be the order of the day. Piety and good nature will dwindle slowly... Passion and lust will be the only attraction between the sexes. Women will be the objects of sensual pleasure. Dishonest will be the bottom line of subsistence. Learned people will be ridiculed and put to shame; the word of the wealthy person will be the only law." |
| Kalleshwar | Another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Kalpa | A kalpa is a length of time in Hindu cosmology. It is equal to 4,320 million years, a "day of Brahma" or one thousand Yugas, measuring the duration of the world; a "month of Brahma" is supposed to contain thirty such Kalpas, or 129.6 billion years. According to the Mahabharata, 12 months of Brahma constitute his year, and 100 such years. Fifty years of Brahma's are supposed to have elapsed, and we are now in the shvetavaraha-kalpa of the fifty-first; at the end of a Kalpa the world is annihilated. |
| Kamandalu | Holy Pot |
| Kartik Poornima | Full Moon day in the month of Kartik as per Hindu calendar and November or December month of English Calendar. |
| Kartik Poornima | Full moon day of Kartik month, the 8th Hindu month and the month of November or December as per English calendar |
| Kartikeya | Son of Lord Shiva |
| Kashi | A holy place in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. |
| Kashi | In Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh state of India. |
| Kashi Benaras, | Holy places in Uttar Pradesh State, in India. |

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| Badrikedar | |
| Kashi Vishveshwar | Another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Khandoba | another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Kheer | Sweet dish prepared of milk and vermicelli |
| Khichdi | A mixed preparation of rice and pulse |
| King Janaka | King of Mithila, father of Goddess Sita, the devoted wife of Lord Rama |
| Kirtan | Narration of a topic, generally spiritual in nature, punctuated by music. |
| Kirtankar | One who performs Kirtan. One who narrates a spiritual topic punctuated by music. |
| Kokanya | In this context- A person living in Konkan, Maharashtra. |
| Kotikoop | Water tank |
| Koupeen | A loin cloth just covering private parts |
| Kunda Flower | A kind of Jasmine flower |
| Langoti | A strip of cloth just covering the private parts |
| Lord Mahesh | Another name of Lord Shiva |
| Lord Narsinha | Lion-Headed Man - The Fourth incarnation of Lord Vishnu |
| Lord Pandurang | Another name of Lord Vithal. |
| Lord Shiva | Shiva is a form of Ishvara or God. Shiva is the supreme God in Shaivism, one of the major branches of Hinduism. Adi Sankara interprets the name Shiva meaning "One who purifies everyone by the utterance of His name" or the Pure One. That is, Shiva is unaffected by the three gunas (characteristics) of Prakrti (matter) namely Satva, Rajas, and Tamas. Shiva is one of the Trimurti (i.e trinity"). In the Trimurti, Shiva is the destroyer, while Brahma is the creator and Vishnu is the preserver. Even though he represents destruction, Shiva is viewed as a positive force (The Destroyer of Evil), since creation follows destruction. However, according to Shaivism, Shiva is not merely a destroyer but performs five functions: 1. Creator, 2. Preserver, 3. Destroyer, 4. Hiding the sins, and most importantly, 5. Blessing. Shiva also assumes many other roles, including the Lord of Ascetics (Mahadeva), the Lord of Boons (Rudra), and also the Universal Divinity (Mahesvara).Shaivaites, the worshippers of Shiva consider as the Ultimate Reality. Shiva is usually represented by the Shiva linga (or lingam), usually depicted as a clay mound with three horizontal stripes on it. In anthropomorphised images, he is generally represented as immersed in deep meditation on Mount Kailash, his traditional abode. Shiva is referred to as the good one or the auspicious one. Shiva as Rudra is considered to be the destroyer of evil and sorrow. Shiva as Shankara is the doer of good. Shiva is 'tri netra' (divine vision), and is 'neela kantha' (blue necked,having consumed the poison Halahala to save the world from destruction). Shiva as Nataraja is the Divine Cosmic Dancer. Shiva as Ardh narishvara is both man and woman. He is both static and dynamic; both creator and destroyer. He is the oldest and the youngest; he is the eternal youth as well as the infant. He is the source of fertility in all living beings. He has gentle as well as fierce forms. Shiva is the greatest of renouncers as well as the ideal lover. He destroys evil and protects good. He bestows prosperity on worshipers although he is austere. He is omnipresent and resides in everyone as pure consciousness. Shiva is inseparable from Parvati (also referred to as Shakti),the daughter of Himavaan and Haimavati. There is no Shiva without Shakti and no Shakti without Shiva;the two are one, the absolute state of being - consciousness and bliss. |
| Lord Veer Bhadra | The name of a powerful hero created by Lord Shiva, whom he ordered to destroy the Dakshayadnya |
| Lord Vishwanath | another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Maghi Poornima | Full moon day in the month of Magha as per Hindu calendar and January or February as per English calendar |
| Maha pooja | Solemn worship on great occasions. |

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| Mahabhojan Mahaprasad | Feeding devotees for seven days in the Muth |
| Mahamantra | The great Mantra, a sacred hymn of the deities |
| Mahar Community | Depressed class of people. Generally performing low jobs and used to live on the outskirts of a village during those times. Mahar's would normally be seen as untouchables during those times. |
| Mahasamadhi | Last conscious communion with God. Fully accomplished yogis have been said to consciously leave their bodies at their WILL and merge effortlessly into the transcendental Divine Bliss or the Supreme spirit. |
| Mahashivratri | Mahashivaratri is a great religious festival dedicated to Lord Shiva, held on the 14th day of the second half of the month of Magh as per Hindu calendar and February month as per English Calendar. |
| Mala | Rossary |
| Malbar | A region in south of India. |
| Mallikarjun | Another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Mamlatdar | Taluka Magistrate |
| Mangalwedha | A town in Solapur District, Maharashtra |
| Mantrashastra | A sacred science which teaches the prayers and hymns to be addressed to particular deities |
| Maratha | Non-Brahmin. Warrior community |
| Margasheersh Poornima | Full moon day of the ninth Hindu month and the month of December as per English Calendar. |
| Maruti Mandir | (Maruti- Lord Hanuman, Mandir- Temple). Temple of Lord Hanuman |
| Matherchod | Rascal. A very offensive abusive word used only in very derogatory way. |
| Maya | Illusion. |
| Maya | Illusion. Maya must be seen through in order to achieve moksha (liberation of the soul from the cycle of death and rebirth) - ahamkar (ego-consciousness) and karma are seen as part of the binding forces of Maya. |
| Meen Rashi | Pisces sign of zodiac |
| Mehandi | Henna |
| Mogalai | The then Hyderabad |
| Moharram | The day of Imam Hussain's martyrdam, which is held sacred by Mohammedans and celebrated as a day of mourning |
| Mool Purush, Vat Ka Vriksha, Dattanagar | I am the eternal Supreme Brahman with a background of banyan tree and originated from the incarnation of Lord Dattatrey |
| Moulvis | Muslim Priests |
| Mouni Baba | One who has taken a vow of silence |
| Mount Abu | a Mountain in Rajasthan. |
| Muth | Temple-Shrine. Muth and Temple - Shrine have been used interchangeably in this book. |
| Naivedya | Food offered to the Deity. An important element in puja. Also see Footnote 87. |
| Namsmaran | The continuous repetition of God's name (or Sadguru's name). |
| Narasimha | Half Man-Half Lion Avatar of Lord Vishnu. In a previous avatar, (Varaha), Vishnu killed the rakshasa Hiranyaksha. Hiranyaksha's brother Hiranyakashipu, greatly angered by this, starts to abhor Lord Vishnu and His followers. Further, he decides to put an end to Vishnu by gaining magical powers by performing a penance for Brahma. Brahma, pleased with his tough penance, appears before him and agrees to grant a boon. Hiranyakashipu asks for a tricky boon from Brahma: that he would not die on earth or in space, nor in fire or water, neither during the day nor at |

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| | night, neither inside a building nor outside, not by the hand of a human, god, animal, nor by any animate or inanimate being. This virtually no-death boon to Hiranyakashipu makes him arrogant enough to conquer the entire world, not caring that it means severe trouble and torture for common people, munis and followers of Vishnu. Meanwhile, while Hiranyakashipu is away for the penance, divine sage Narada preaches about the sweetness of reciting Vishnu's name to Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahlada, while he is still in his mother's womb. Thus, Prahlada is born a very devoted follower of Vishnu, the youngest ardent devotee of Vishnu. Hiranyakashipu fails in convincing his son to join him against Vishnu, and therefore tries to kill him in many ways, but each time Prahlada is protected by Vishnu himself. When asked, Prahlada refuses to acknowledge his father as the supreme lord of the universe and claims that Vishnu is omnipresent. Once Hiranyakashipu points to a particular pillar and asks if Vishnu is in it; Prahlada answers, "He was, He is and He will be". Hiranyakashipu, unable to control his anger, smashes the pillar, and Vishnu in the form of Narasimha comes from it. In order to kill Hiranyakashipu, who cannot be killed by human, god or animal, Narasimha is partly all three: a god incarnate as a part-human, part-animal. He comes upon Hiranyakashipu at twilight (when it is neither day nor night) on the threshold of a courtyard (neither indoors nor out), and puts the demon on his lap (neither earth nor space). Using his nails (neither animate nor inanimate) as weapons, he disembowels and kills the demon. |
| Narayan Teerth | Holy water |
| Nath Sect | A member of the medieval religious sect called the Nathpanth. The Nath Sampradaya, a development of the earlier Siddha or Avadhut Sampradaya is an ancient lineage of spiritual masters. Its founding is traditionally ascribed to Shri Bhagavan Dattatreya, considered by some to have been an incarnation of Lord Shiva. However, the establishment of the Naths as a distinct historical sect began around the 8th or 9th century with a simple fisherman, Matsyendranath (sometimes called Minanath, who may be identified with or called the father of Matsyendranath in some sources). One story of the origin of the Nath teachings is that Matsyendranath was swallowed by a fish and while inside the fish overheard the teachings given by Lord Shiva to his wife Parvati, who had taken her to the bottom of the ocean in order to avoid being overheard. After being rescued from the fish by another fisherman, Matsyendranath took initiation as a sannyasin from Siddha Carpati. It was Matsyendranath who became known as the founder of the Nath Sampradaya. Matysendranath's two most important disciples were Caurangi and Gorakshanath. The latter came to eclipse his Master in importance in many of the branches and sub-sects of the Nath Sampradaya. Even today, Gorakshanath is considered by many to have been the most influential of the ancient Naths. He is reputed to have written the first books dealing with Laya yoga and the raising of the kundalini-shakti. He is also reputed to have been the original inventor of Hatha yoga. The Nath Sampradaya does not recognize caste barriers, and their teachings were adopted by outcasts and kings alike. The heterodox Nath tradition has many sub-sects, but all honor Matsyendranath and Gorakshanath as the founders of the tradition. |
| Neem Tree | Margosa tree |
| Nirgun Padukas | Attributeless foot impressions on a stone worshipped as the trace of God or SadGuru |
| Nirgun-Nirakar | Attributeless - Formless. Virtueless and formless God |
| Nizam | The ruler of the then Hyderabad state |
| Nrusinhawadi Dattakshetra | A holy place of Lord Dattatreya |
| Omkar | The continous vibratory sound of Om or Aum: Om (also Aum, ) is the most sacred syllable in Hinduism, symbolizing the infinite Brahman and the entire Universe. This syllable is sometimes called the "Udgitha" or "pranava mantra" (primordial mantra), because it is considered to be the primal sound, and because most mantras begin with it. In Hindu metaphysics, it is proposed that the manifested cosmos (from Brahman) has name and form (nama-rupa), and that the closest approximation to the name and form of the universe is Om, since all existence is fundamentally composed of vibration. (This concept of describing reality as vibrations, or rhythmic |

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| | waves, can also be found in quantum physics and superstring theory, which describe the universe in terms of vibrating fields or strings.) |
| Paduka | The impressions of the lotus feet of a true Guru, either on stone or wooden or metal (usually silver) sandals. |
| Padyapooja | Padyapooja is a ceremony of honouring a person worthy of reverence, by cleaning the holy-feet of that person and then worshipping him |
| Panchapatra | A small cylinderical vessel |
| Panchashramee | One who observes the five stages of life of a Brahman |
| Pandhainath Lord Vithoba | A manifested form of Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva in a single deity. |
| Pandharpur | Holy place of Lord Vithoba the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Pandharpur is a town in state of Maharashtra in Western India. Pandharpur is one of the most respected pilgrimage sites in Maharashtra. It is located on the banks of the Bhima river, which is also known as Chandrabhaga. Pandharpur hosts the famous Vithoba temple, on the banks of the river. Vithoba is considered to be Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu; Vitthala is said to have been derived from the word Vishnu in Kannada. Vithoba's consort is Rakhumai or Rukmini. The worship of Vishnu - Vitthala at Pandharpur is derived mainly from the puranas and has been augmented by the contribution of the great Vaishnava saints of Maharashtra from the 13th through the 17th centuries (Dnyaneshwar, Namdev, , Sant Eknath, Tukaram). This temple, covering a vast area, has a total of six gates. The eastern entrance to this temple is known as the Namdev gate. The sanctum enshrines a standing image of Vithoba also known as Panduranga, Pandhari or Vitthala. Pandharpur hosts 4 "Yatras" in a year - of which "Aashadhi Yatra" is the one which attracts most (around 0.4 million) piligrims to Pandharpur. Piligrims take holy bath in river Bhima and usually stand in queues 3km long in order to take "Darshana" of lord Vitthala. |
| Param Hans | An ascetic of the highest order |
| Parikrama | Circumambulation |
| Parjanyasookta | Repeating Vedic hymns regarding rain |
| Patalganga | The source of river Ganga in the Himalayas |
| Patil | Head of a Village |
| Paush Shukla Dwitiya | Month of January as per English Calendar |
| Pedhas | Sweet Meat. A sweet prepared from Milk ingredient. Generally Pedhas are a normal way to celebrate festivities and offerings to a Deity. |
| Peepal Tree | The Holy Fig Tree. Tree belongs to the Sacred Figs (Ficus religiosa). |
| Peersaheb | A muslim saint |
| Pradosh | Shivopasana, an observance in the worship of Lord Shiva on the evening of thirteenth lunar day |
| Prana Pratisthan | Prana pratistha is a rite or ceremony (Samskara in Sanskrit) by which the spirit or being of a deity is infused or brought to inhabit a murti or cult image of that deity. Once Prana Pratisthan is performed, the Idol is considered to be divinely charged and a representation of the Divine supreme spirit. |
| Pranayam | A mode of regulated breathing. |
| Prasad | Prasad is both a mental condition of generosity, as well as a material substance that is first offered to a deity and then consumed with the faith that the deity's blessing resides within it. In contemporary Hindu religious practice in India, the desire to get prasad and have darshan are the two major motivations of pilgrimage & temple visits. In its material sense, prasada is created by a process of giving and receiving between a human devotee and the divine god. For example, a devotee makes an offering of a material substance such as flowers, fruits, or sweets -- which is called 'naivedya'. The deity then 'enjoys' or tastes a bit of the offering. This now-divinely invested substance is called 'prasad", and is received by the devotee to be ingested, worn, etc. It may be the same material that was originally offered, |

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| | or material offered by others and then re-distributed to other devotees. As a 'leftover substance', prasada is special because it is understood as being invested with divine grace or blessing. |
| Prayag | New name - Alahabad in Uttar Pradesh |
| Puran Puroshattam | Ancient and Eternal Supreme Being |
| Puranas | The Puranas (Sanskrit, puraná "ancient", since they focus on ancient history of the universe) are part of Hindu Smriti; these religious scriptures discuss varied topics like devotion to God in his various aspects, traditional sciences like Ayurveda, Jyotish, cosmology, concepts like dharma, karma, reincarnation and many others. The sage Vyasa is credited with compilation of Puranas from age (yuga) to age, and for the current age he has been identified and named Krishna Dvaipayana, the son of the sage Parashara.According to tradition the Puranas were written by Vyasa at the end of Dvapara Yuga. One of the main objectives of the Puranas was to make available the essence of the Vedas to the common man, and the Puranas were basically meant not for the scholars but for the ordinary man. They bring forth the Vedic knowledge and teachings by way of parables, allegories, stories, legends, life stories of kings and other prominent persons, and chronologies of historical events. The Puranas unfold the principles of Hinduism in a simple way. Puranas are named after the three main forms of Brahman: Brahma, the Creator; Vishnu, the Protector of Life and Humanity; and Shiva, the Destroyer. Brahma Puranas -- Brahma Purana, Brahmanda Purana, Brahma Vaivarta Purana, Markandeya Purana, Bhavishya Purana, Vamana Purana. Vishnu Puranas -- (Harivansh) Vishnu Purana, Bhagavata Purana, Naradeya Purana, Garuda Purana, Padma Purana, Varaha Purana. Shiva Puranas -- Shiva Purana, Vayu purana, Linga Purana, Skanda Purana, Agni Purana, Matsya Purana, Kurma purana. Apart from the above mentioned eighteen major Puranas, there are an equal number of subsidiary Puranas, called Upapuranas. They are: Sanatkumara, Narasimha, Brihannaradiya, Sivarahasya, Durvasa, Kapila, Vamana, Bhargava, Varuna, Kalika, Samba, Nandi, Surya, Parasara, Vasishtha, Devi-Bhagavata, Ganesa and Hamsa. |
| Puranik | An expert in Puranas. Also see Footnote on - Puranas. |
| Puranpoli | A sweet stuffed pancake generally prepared on important ceremonies and festivals. |
| Rajas | The mode of passion |
| Rameshwar | A holy place in Tamil Nadu, South India |
| Rameshwar | Another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Ramnavmi | The birth day of Lord Rama celebrated on ninth day of the first half of Chaitra month as per Hindu calendar and March or April month as per English calendar |
| Rangapanchami | Festival of Colors. This festival falls on 5th day of the latter half of the month Falgun as per Hindu Calendar and March month as per English Calendar. |
| Rigveda | The holiest Hindu Scripture. There are four Vedas-Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. It is one of the world's oldest religious texts. It was preserved over the centuries by oral tradition. |
| Rigvedi Brahmin | A follower of Rigveda, the first of the four Vedas, Hindu Holy Scriptures. Also see Footnote 11. |
| Rigvedi Brahmin | A Brahmin who is an expert in Rigveda - Hindu Holy Scripture. Also see Footnote on 'Veda' |
| Rudrabhishek | A ceremonial ablution of Lord Shiva |
| Rudraksha | Rudraksha has its etymological origin in the Sanskrit words, 'Rudra' and 'Aksha'. 'Rudra' is another name for Lord Shiva, and 'aksha' means teardrop. Mythological tales have it that the Rudraksha plant was born out of Lord Shiva's tear drops. Ancient scriptures, such as 'Shiva Purana', 'Padma Purana' and 'Srimad Bhagavad' mention the greatness and wonderful powers of the Rudraksha. For thousands of years, they have adorned the bodies of sages and saints leading a fearless life in far-flung frontiers seeking enlightenment and liberation. |
| Sadguru | Sadguru means true guru (Sanskrit- sat=true), literally- true teacher. The title means that his students have faith that the guru can be trusted and will lead them |

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| | to moksha, enlightenment or inner peace. It is based on a long line of Hindu philosophical understandings of the importance of knowledge and that the teacher, guru, is the sacred conduit to self-realization. |
| Sadguru Atmaram | The precepto, who has been distracted from sense objects and delighted in the contempletion of one's own soul |
| Sadguru Mauli | The preceptor a mother - Ramanand with affection looked upon his preceptor Sri Swami Samarth, as his mother |
| Sadhak | One who accomplishes by engaging oneself in a course of rites, observances acts and sufferings in order to obtain Moksha or emancipation. |
| Sage Narada | A divine sage, who is an enduring chanter of the names Hari and Narayana which are other names for Vishnu, considered to be the supreme God by Hindus. He is regarded the Manasputra (son born of one's mind) of Brahma as he was born of his thoughts. He is regarded as the Triloka sanchaari, the ultimate nomad who roams the three lokas of Swargaloka (heaven), Mrityuloka (earth) and Patalloka (nether-world). He does this to find out about the life and welfare of people. He was the first to practise Natya Yoga. He is also known as Kalahapriya as he playfully causes quarrels amongst Gods (devas), Goddesses and people. |
| Sagun-Sakar | With attributes and form. All-virtuous personified form of God |
| Sahaj-samadhi | Contemplating the highest state of meditation and attain unity with the Absolute |
| Samadhi | Samadhi is a term that describes a non-dualistic state of consciousness in which the consciousness of the experiencing subject becomes one with the experienced object, and in which the mind becomes still (one-pointed or concentrated)but the person remains conscious. A tomb is normally constructed at the place where a Sadguru takes 'Samadhi'. In such cases the Tomb is referred to as 'Samadhi'. |
| Samadhi Mandir | A Temple Shrine dedicated to a Saint after he leaves his body |
| Sangam | Confluence of the Rivers Ganga and Panchganga. Typically Sriguru was known to dwell under a Audumbar Tree at the Sangam. Henceforth this dwelling place is commonly referred to as the Sangam. |
| Sardars | Chieftains. Generally considered very royal. |
| Satva | Mode of Goodness |
| Satya yuga | The first Yuga or age, the golden age, comprising of one million seven hundred twentyeight thousand years. In Hindu tradition, the world goes through a continuous cycle of these epochs. Each ascending phase of the cycle from Kali Yuga to Satya Yuga is followed by a descending phase back to Kali Yuga, then another ascending phase and so on. Alternatively, it is sometimes supposed that at the end of the descending Kali Yuga, the world will return to the Satya Yuga, and begin a new decline. The descent from Satya to Kali is associated with progressively deterioration of Dharma (righteousness) manifested as decrease in length of human life and quality of human moral standards. The traditional virtues accorded highest value in the four epochs are: Satya Yuga or Krita Yuga - dhyana (meditation), Treta Yuga - yajna (sacrifice), Dvapara Yuga - archana (worship), Kali Yuga - daana (gifts) In the highest yuga, the great majority of the people can experience spirituality by direct intuitive realization of truth. The veil between the material and the transcendent realms becomes almost transparent. According to Natya Shastra, there is no Natya performances in the Krita Yuga because it is a period free from any kind of unhappiness or misery. Satya Yuga is also called the Golden Age. Treta Yuga is the mental age, mental power is harnessed, men are in power, and inventions dissolve the illusion of time. (Inventions are characteristic of both Dvapara and Treta yugas.) In Dwapara Yuga, science flourishes, people experience the spiritual in terms of subtle energies and rational choices, inventions are abundant, particularly those that dissolve the illusion of distance (between people and between things), and power is mostly in the hands of women. The end of this age is associated with the death of Krishna, and the events described in the Mahabharata. In the lowest phase, Kali Yuga, most people are aware only of the physical aspect of existence, the predominant emphasis of living is material survival, and power is mostly in the hands of men. People's relationship with the spiritual is governed predominantly by superstition and by authority. Temples, |

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| | wars, and writing are hallmarks of Dvapara and Kali yugas. In the higher ages (Treta and Satya), writing is unnecessary because people communicate directly by thought; temples are unnecessary because people feel the omnipresence of God; wars are rare but they do occur; one such war is described in the Ramayana. The traditional timescale of the yugas is as follows- Satya Yuga or Krita Yuga - 1,728,000 years - Treta Yuga - 1,296,000 years - Dvapara Yuga - 864,000 years - Kali Yuga - 432,000 years Upon conclusion of seventy-one (or sometimes seven) circuits of this cycle, there is a period equally long during which the world is inundated; then the cycle begins again. |
| Satya Yuga | The Satya Yuga, also called Sat Yuga, Krta Yuga and Krita Yuga is the "Yuga (Age or Era) of Truth", when humankind is governed by gods, and every manifestation or work is close to the purest ideal and mankind will allow intrinsic goodness to rule supreme. It is sometimes referred to as the "Golden Age."The yugas are said to succeed each other almost endlessly. After the perfect Satya Yuga, a decline marks the Treta Yuga. Further decline brings about the Dwapara Yuga, and after it comes the final and dark Kali Yuga, a time of wickedness, when man kills man. At the end of the cycle a Divine Being is said to take birth and reestablish righteousness, thus beginning a new Satya Yuga. Amongst the four eras, the Satya Yuga is the first and the most significant one. This era extends up to 1,728,000 years. Knowledge, meditation, and penance hold special importance in this era. All the pillars of religion are present in totality. During Satya Yuga, all people engage only in good, sublime deeds. |
| Seers | Indian measure of weight. One Seer = Two pounds. |
| Shaktipat | The ancient method of awakening and activating the Kundalini energy in the shortest possible time. Kundalini energy is the energy dormant at the base of the spine of every human being |
| Shaligram | A black stone worshipped as God Vishnu |
| Shankaracharya | Shankaracharya, (Sankaracharya in standard transliteration) is a commonly used title of heads of mathas (monasteries) in the Advaita tradition. The title derives from Sankara of Kaladi, an influential theologian of Hinduism, who first established four mathas in the four regions of India. He was given the name Sankara at birth, and acharya is a title, meaning 'learned teacher'. As the first historically recognized teacher in the lineage, Sankara is also called Adi Sankara. (The Sanskrit word Adi means original/first.) The four institutions traditionally said to have been established by Adi Sankara are; the Uttaramnaya matha, or northern matha at Joshimath, the Purvamnaya matha or eastern matha, the Govardhana matha, at Puri, the Dakshinamnaya matha, or the Sringeri Sharada Peetham, the southern matha, at Shringeri, the Paschimamnaya matha, or the Dwaraka Pitha, the western matha, at Dwarka. The heads of these four institutions are considered the principal Shankaracharya-s in India today. |
| Shastras | Shastra is a Sanskrit word used to denote education/knowledge in a general sense. The word is generally used as a suffix in the context of technical or specialised knowledge in a defined area of practice. For example, Astra shastra means, knowledge about "Handling of weapons", Astra means weapons, and Shastra is their knowledge. The shastra is commonly used to mean a treatise or text written in explanation of some idea/topic. There are several types of shastras in the Hindu religion. |
| Shastri | One who has studied the shastras |
| Shastries | One who has studied the Hindu scriptures Shastras. Also see Footnote for Shastras. |
| Shivabhishek | Ceremonial ablution regarding Lord Shiva |
| Shloka | Sanskrit verse |
| Shodashopachar | Very Elaborate way of worshipping a deity. It incorporates 16 different constituents in worshipping a deity, they are%- Awahana, Asana, Padya, Arghya, Achamana, Snana, Vastra, Yadnayopaweet, Gandha, Pushpa, Dhoop, Deepa, Naivedya, Dakshina, Pradakshina, Mantra, Pushpa. |
| Shraddha | Offerings in the memory of the manes of the deceased ancestors - death anniversary of one of the family members |

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| Shraddha | Ceremony performed periodically in the honour of a dead relative and offer food, water etc to Brahmin in the honour of manes |
| Shravan | Fifth month in the Hindu Calendar, July/August as per English Calendar |
| Siddheshwar | Another name of Lord Shiva. |
| Siddhi | Spiritual Accomplishment. Power emanating from the state of awakening of the charkas. Each charka opens up a spate of mystical powers. A person who has all the seven centers/charkas awakened is said to be one with the universal spirit/God. |
| Sonareen | Woman from Goldsmith caste |
| Soubhagya | Auspicious state of wifehood |
| Sri Swami Samarth | Sriguru / Sri Narsinha Saraswati. Henceforth referred to as Sri Swami Samarth. |
| Sriguru | (Lord) Sri Narasinha Saraswati |
| Srimad Bhagavatam | One of the most important classics of India describing the life and times of Lord Krishna. It is verily the Hindu Bible. Also called Bhagvat Purana. The writer of this book is named Krishna Dvaipayana Vyasadeva, also called Badarayana. He is the Lord, the bhagavan, amongst the philosophers, who in India assembled all the holy texts. He arranged the Vedas, the basic books (s'ruti) with the mantras for the rituals, the wisdom and the hymns and wrote the Mahabharata, the greatest epic poem in the world describing the history (itihâsa) of the great fall that the Vedic culture once made. The Bhagavad Gita is a part of it. Vyâsa also wrote the rest of the eighteen great Bibles (the puranas) of India as well as the Brahma-sutra, his masterpiece on the Absolute Truth. |
| Srishail Parvat | Srishail Mountain. Srishail Mountain is a holy place of Lord Mallikarjun (Lord Shiva) in Andhra Pradesh where one of the twelve famous 'Lingas' of the Hindu God Shiva is located. |
| Subedar | Officer |
| Surya-Swar | Breathing out air out of the right nostril. |
| Suvasinee | A woman with the husband still alive. |
| Swami Dattaguru | Lord Dattatrey |
| Swar Shastra | The treatise which interprets the indications and premonitions of the air as it proceeds through the nostrils |
| Taboota | The bier carried by Mohammedans in Moharram |
| Tahsildar | An officer in charge of a sub-division of a district |
| Tamas | The mode of ignorance |
| Tambul | A roll of betal leaves generally chewed by people for its juice. |
| Tantra-Mantra | Enchantment and Sacred Hymns |
| Teerth | Holy water (or mixture of water and milk) given by a Sadguru or Deity. This water is considered to have divine energy of the Sadguru and is accepted as a blessing and is consumed by devotees. |
| Teli | A person who is in the business of selling Oil. Generally referred to as 'Oil Man'. |
| Thread Ceremony | 'Upanayanam' perhaps better known outside India by the name "Sacred thread ceremony", is a Hindu rite-of-passage ritual. Traditionally, the ceremony was performed to mark the point at which male children began their formal education. The ceremony is performed to young boys of 7+ years of age (and girls in some sects) from the three varnas of brahmin, kshatriya, vaishya. The youngster is taught during the ceremony the secret of life through Brahmopadesam (revealing the nature of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality) or the Gayatri mantra. He then becomes qualified for life as a student or Brahmacharya, as prescribed in the Manusmriti. The Sanskrit word Upanayanam is believed to be derived from the word nayanam meaning "eye", prefixed with upa- ("auxiliary"), making for the interpretative meaning: bringing (the ultimate truth nearer in sight) |
| Tirth | A pond of Holy water. Also see Footnote |

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| Tola | Measure of weight generally used for precious metals. 10 Gm is 1 Tola. |
| Tonga | Horse carriage. Traditionally used for transportating people over long distances. |
| Trinity | A union of Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva |
| Trishul | Trident. This is the weapon wielded by Hindu God, Lord Shiva. The three points are said to represent Shiva's three aspects - creator, destroyer and protector. |
| Tulsi | The Tulsi (also known as Tulasi) plant or Holy Basil (Ocimum tenuiflorum) is an important symbol in many Hindu religious traditions. The name "tulsi" means "the incomparable one". Tulsi is a venerated plant and devotees worship it in the morning and evening. Tulsi grows wild in the tropics and warm regions. Dark or Shyama (Krishna) Tulsi and light or Rama Tulsi are the two main varieties of basil. The former possesses greater medicinal value and is commonly used for worship. Tulsi has also been recognized by the rishis for thousands of years as a prime herb in Ayurvedic treatment. It has been traditionally used by Hindus, and now others, for its diverse healing properties. Tulsi is mentioned by Acharya Charak, in the Charak Samhita, the central teaching of Ayurvedic medicine written at least two thousand years ago, and in the Rigveda. Tulsi is considered to be an adaptogen, balancing different processes in the body, and helpful for adapting to stress. Marked by its strong aroma and astringent taste, Tulsi is regarded as a kind of "elixir of life" and believed to promote longevity. |
| Tutelary Deity | A tutelary spirit is a god, who serves as the guardian or watcher over a particular site, person, or nation. |
| Upanishad | 108 Philosophical treatises that appear within Vedas. The Upanishads are part of the Hindu Shruti scriptures which primarily discuss meditation and philosophy and are seen as religious instructions by most forms of Hinduism. The very edifice of Indian religions (Hinduism,Jainism,and Budhism) is built on the strong foundation of the Upanishads. The Upanishads are mystic or spiritual interpretations on the Vedas, their putative end and essence, and thus known as Vedanta ("the end of the Vedas"). |
| Vaaksiddhi | A superhuman power that turns everything a person says into truth or reality |
| Vada | Fried cake made of lentils andother grams. |
| Vaidur Nagar | New name- ‘Bidar’, now in Karnatak State |
| Vaidya | Ayurvedic physician. Ayurveda or ayurvedic medicine is a from of anchient traditional medicine in use primarily in the Indian subcontinent. The word "Ayurveda" is a tatpurusha compound of ayus "life" and veda "knowledge", and would roughly translate as the "Science of Life". Ayurveda deals with the measures of healthy living, along with therapeutic measures that relate to physical, mental, social and spiritual harmony. Ayurveda is also one among the few traditional systems to medicine involving surgery. |
| Vaidya | Ayurvedic physician |
| Vaikunth | The paradise of the Lord Vishnu |
| Vairagya | Complete detachment from worldly pleasures. A very high state of realization. |
| Vaishnav | Devotee of Lord Vishnu |
| Vaishnavas | Followers and devotees of Lord Vishnu |
| Vatavriksha | Indian Fig tree |
| Veda Bua | Crazy Man: Lunatic |
| Vedanta | The theological part of the Vedas, i.e. Upanishad. Vedanta means the anta or culmination or essence of the Vedas. It is a principal branch of Hindu philosophy. Literally, the end of the Vedas is constituted by the series of literature termed as the Aranyakas (the forest scriptures), of which the Upanishads form the chief constituent. The primary philosophy captured in the Upanishads, that of one absolute reality termed as Brahman is the main principle of Vedanta. The sage Badarayana is supposed to be one of the major proponents of this philosophy and author of the Brahma Sutras based on the Upanishads. The concept of Brahman - the Supreme Spirit or the eternal, self existent, immanent and transcedent |

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| | Supreme and Ultimate Reality which is the divine ground of all Being - is central to Vedanta. |
| Vedas | The Vedas are the most ancient books in the World, and they are the Foundation of Hinduism. Veda means knowledge. Vedas have no beginning or end. While it might surprise people how a book can have no beginning or end, the ancient Rishis who wrote these accepted that the complete knowledge of the Universe could never fit in any book, so there would always be new things to discover. This philosophy makes Hinduism a very tolerant religon, always ready to accept new ideas from other cultures. |
| Vibhuti | Vibhuti, a word of Sanskrit and several other languages of India. Literally, it has several meaning including all pervading; superhuman power; and wealth. Vibhuti is also the name for sacred ash used in religious worship in Hinduism, especially connected with Lord Shiva. The ash has several symbolic meanings. Placed on the forehead of devotees, it covers the mark of the spiritual third eye of Hindu belief that sees development of mystic insight as the primary path to Self-realization. It is a reminder of one's mortality since bodies are cremated being only temporary vessels of the soul. It calls to the good of ridding oneself of selfish and base worldly desires that wrap the self in Maya (illusion) just as Shiva burned the god of desire, Kama, to ashes when he attempted to break Shiva's focus on the Divine Truth. |
| Vishnu Panchayatan | Five deities - Shiva, Vishnu, Sun, Ganapati and Devee |
| Vishnu Sahasranaam | A list of One thousand names of Lord Vishnu |
| Vishnupad | The lotus foot of Lord Vishnu |
| Warkaris | Pilgrim-devotees of Lord Vithoba, Pandharpur |
| Yahoodi | Israeli |
| Yajurvedi Brahmin | A Brahmin who observes the rites and ceremonies as prescribed in the Yajurveda, the second of the four Vedas- Hindu scriptures. Also see Footnote for Vedas. |
| Yavan | Muslim |
| Yogeshwar Siddhapurush | A cccomplished and divine ascetic of the greatest order. |
| Yoginis | Its literal meaning is a demoness or a sorceress. The word is used to refer to advanced female yoga practitioners. In a wider and general context, a yogini is believed to be women who possess supernatural powers. During Durga's battles with the demons (asurs) eight yoginis are described who emanated from the body of Durga, and they assisted her in the battle, Later, the number of Yoginis increased to sixty-four. All these yoginis represented forces of vegetation and fertility, illness and death, Yoga and magic. All yogins are worshipped collectively and together, each one is enshrined in an individual position in a circular temple open to the sky. One of the most impressive yogini temples is the 9th century Chaunsath yogini (sixty-four yogini) temple is located at Hirapur, Bhubaneshvar district, Orissa. Other two important yogini temples are the 10th century monuments at Khajuraho, near Chhattarpur and Bheraghat, near Jabalpur, both in Madhya Pradesh. |
| Yog-Vidya | Science of spiritual discipline |
| 27 Yoga's | There are twenty-seven yoga's; they are Vishkambh, Preeti, Ayushman, Soubhagya, Shobhan, Atigand, Sukarma, Dhruti, Shoola, Gand, Vruddhi, Dhruv, Vyaghat, Harshana, Vajra, Siddhi, Vyatipat, Variyan, Parigha, Shiva, Siddhi, Sadhya, Shubha, Shukla, Brahma, Aaindra, and Vaighruti. The astrologers enumerate twenty-eight yoga's. |

*Anantakoti*
*Brahmanda Nayaka*
*Rajadhiraj*
*Yogiraj*
*Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj*
*Ki Jai*

*"There are many who call themselves as leaders, but one who conquers the six enemies of mankind viz lust, anger, greed, pride, temptation and jealousy can only be regarded as the true leader of this nation".*

***-Shree Sadguru BabaMaharaj Sahasrabuddhe***

*"In this world, a number of living beings come together in one family based on their good or bad past deeds. As long as their resolves are even they all behave with love, happiness and friendship. But if, as per the deeds of one's fate, one comes there to endure the uneven resolves then the same loving lives depending upon their uneven resolves, become firm mutual enemies and start troubling each other with all hostility"*

***-Shree Sadguru Digambardas Maharaj***